

‘Life in the Travelling Circus’:
A Sociological Analysis of the Lives of Touring
Professional Golfers

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Abstract

As sports become more professionalised and international in scope athletes increasingly migrate from one country to another. These individuals are required to adjust and adapt quickly when moving internationally. Literature on sports migration, however, tends to focus on routes and pathways rather than the effects of movement on the athletes themselves. The aim of this study, therefore, was to explore how the frequent workplace circulation inherent in the lives of highly skilled migrants affects their social selves. Using professional golf as a case study, this project includes an analysis of family issues, relationships between players, pay and conditions, and technical approaches to playing golf. Interviews were conducted with 20 male professional golfers and analysed from a figurational standpoint. As golf tournaments are increasingly staged in a myriad of different countries players are required to spend longer periods of time away from home and experience intense feelings of loneliness and isolation. It is argued that golfers are not isolated in terms of people who they have around them while on tour, but rather in terms of lack of contact with people who they have positive meaningful feelings towards, such as their family and friends. To help reduce this loneliness, golfers develop behaviours that foster temporary we-group alliances with other players they perceive to be similar to themselves. People in such groups are friends, characterised by bonds of togetherness, while also enemies showing evidence of conflicts as they are in direct competition for a share of the overall prize money. Indeed the monetary rewards available for top golfers continues to increase, however, such recompense is only available to small numbers and the majority fare poorly. It is argued that the prize money breakdown fosters internalised behaviour constraints whereby many players ‘gamble’ on pursuing golf as their main source of income despite the odds against them. This habitus is strengthened given the significant financial investments many players have made to fulfil their childhood dreams, which further blurs their ability to see the reality of their lives. The result is many golfers are constrained to develop networks with sponsors for financial reasons which leaves some with conflicting choices between regular income, and adhering to restrictive contractual agreements, or the freedom to choose between different brands. As such, overall the results of this study highlight the importance of considering the cultural and social adaptations required in the life of a transient migrant.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The life of a world-class professional golfer seems like a whirlwind of private planes, luxury hotel rooms and the chance to earn riches beyond even the wildest of dreams – all while playing the game we love. Not bad, eh? (Cutmore, 2014, para. 1).

This is how Chris Cutmore (2014, para. 1) writing for the Daily Mail explains the life of a professional golfer. Similarly, Kyle Porter (2014, para. 4) reporting for CBS Sports suggests that “one of the best parts about being a pro golf or tennis athlete is that it forces you to get out, see different cultures, experience the world. Oh, and you’re getting paid to do it”. Indeed, it would be difficult to argue against the notion that professional sport is considered a relatively prestigious occupation and as a result many people have, at one time or another, fantasised about becoming a top level performer in their preferred sport. A key aim of this thesis is to analyse some of these common sense assumptions and, in doing so, offer a more adequate viewpoint on the ‘realities’ of life in professional sport. This chapter, therefore, will set out the rationale and justification for such a study and identify where this research can develop an understanding about the lives of highly skilled migrants more generally. This chapter also introduces the research design and provides an overview of the structure of the thesis. Firstly, it is important to provide some background context on the issue at hand.

1.1 Background and aims

The world is becoming an increasingly similar place. No matter where people are they can often access similar clothes, food, television programmes, and sports. This increasingly 'global culture' has been described as the "process of movement away from a world of discrete nation states and their social systems, cultural patterns, political systems, and economies" (Houlihan, 2008, p.554). Similarly, Robertson (1992, p.8) refers to both the "compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole". In other words, there is a greater intensity of connections between people and places due to increasing transnational flows of people, ideas, information, commodities and capital (Maguire, 1999; Lucas, 2003). Virtually every aspect of society – such as an individual's living conditions, belief systems, and knowledge base – is increasingly affected by connections with other groups of people, both near and far away (Maguire, 2011a). Along with pop music, the Internet, multinationals and the environmental movement, sport is regarded as a key agent in globalisation. Indeed, Dunning (1999, p.1) has argued that "no activities have ever served so regularly as foci of simultaneous common interest and concern to so many people all over the world" as sport. Indeed sport has been characterised as the "global culture industry par excellence" (Miller, Lawrence, McKay, & Rowe, 2001, p.13). As Maguire (2011b, p.101) argues, the "global reach of sport is supported by a range of evidence". As such, sport provides an excellent case study through which to further understand processes of globalisation. Indeed the appeal of sport generally increased significantly during the twentieth century, becoming worldwide in scope with the growth of international sporting bodies, competitions, migratory flows of competitors, and globally extensive forms of media

representation, which has resulted in a global sporting system connecting people throughout the world (Maguire, 1999; Ritzer & Atalay, 2010; Van Bottenburg, 2001).

Although the unofficial title of the ‘world game’ is generally given to association football, perhaps it should really belong to golf (Stoddart, 2006). The spread of golf has been vast and courses are found everywhere in the world from North America, South America, Europe, Africa, Middle East, Asia, and Australasia. In short, there are very few places in the world that do not have a golf course or people who play golf. For this reason, Stoddart (2006, p.848) argues that:

Golf represents perhaps the quintessential case study of the inherent relationship between sport, economy, society and environment present in many contemporary national and transnational settings. Yet the ramifications of that relationship remain unexamined by academic analysts and unremarked upon by the golf industry itself. Not only does the golfing subculture itself offer rich ground for sociological investigation but so also does its intricate relationship with the wider social framework that supports it.

As such, golf represents an excellent case study from which to analyse the lives of professional sportspeople specifically, and other highly skilled migrants more generally. Furthermore, Stoddart (2006) identifies that taking such an approach would also contribute to an understanding of the relationship between global work and migrants’ families, significant others, and pay and conditions, despite not actually carrying out such research himself.

As sports have become more professionalised and international in scope, it is perhaps unsurprising that athletes have been increasingly likely to migrate from one country to another (Maguire & Falcous, 2011; Shin & Nam, 2004). In a global economy, the movement of workers between countries is not unusual. Sport is, of course, not immune from this with athletes migrating from one country to another for a variety of reasons, including financial compensation, better coaching, equipment, and support services (Thibault, 2009). Rather than reduce to a number of static reasons, Stead and Maguire (2000, p.53) identify the broad multifaceted nature of “push and pull” factors which contribute to sports labour migration. Indeed, a broad approach involving an examination of wider social issues must be taken rather than focussing simply on the economic aspects of sports migration (Stead & Maguire, 2000; Maguire, 2011a). The process of migration, therefore, is characterised by a number of issues. Migrant sportspeople work in various locations and, as a group, experience varying degrees of exploitation and dislocation (Maguire, 2011a). The constant moving between different cultures requires sport migrants to develop new types of flexible personal controls and dispositions (Maguire, 2011b; Stead & Maguire, 2000). Such individuals are required to adjust and adapt quickly when moving internationally. The central aim of this thesis, therefore, is to explore how the frequent workplace circulation inherent in the lives of highly skilled migrants affects their social selves, which is defined by Burkitt (2008, p.193) as the “means by which we orient ourselves to one another in the social world”. Furthermore, via using the global nature of touring professional golf as a case study, a key objective of this study was to test the theoretical orientation of figurational sociology

and, in doing so, hope to provide more object adequate answers to a number of sub-questions, namely:

- What is the effect of the work of touring professional golf on players' relationships with their significant others?
- How does the financial implications of pursuing a career as a touring professional golfer impact on the development of relationships in their lives?
- How does the touring nature of professional golf affect the way in which players approach the technical aspects of the game?

These interrelated aims form the basis for the main discussion chapters presented in this study.

1.2 Rationale and justification

The broad academic field of globalisation studies has significantly expanded since the 1980s and general usage of the term become more widespread, however, this increasing familiarity has been marked by confusion, misinterpretation, and contentious debate within the literature (Featherstone & Lash, 1995; Guilianotti & Robertson, 2007; Jarvie, 2006; Maguire, 1999; Rowe, 2006; Waters, 1995; Williams, Bradley, Devadason, & Erickson, 2013). Also, globalisation research tends to be heavily theorised with a lack of empirical data. Some 22 years ago Robertson (1992, p.49) explained that there is a danger globalisation will become an “intellectual play zone”, a site for the expression of “residual social theoretical interests, interpretive indulgence, or the display of world ideological preferences” and it appears such fears were not heeded. As such, and despite the plethora of research conducted so far, firm conclusions regarding a number of issues

are yet to be reached (Maguire & Falcous, 2011). One of these potential opportunities for further research includes transient sports migration. The studies which have been conducted on migration – such as those by Maguire and Stead (1998), Lanfranchi and Taylor (2001), and Poli (2010) – are useful and often used to explain migration-related patterns, however, it is argued that they do not adequately explore the problems sport labour migration may entail. These studies tend only to skim the surface by establishing general quantitative observations of directions of migrant flow and do not develop this to interpret the personal struggles and challenges individual migrants may undergo in a foreign setting. Similarly, Roderick (2014) argues that very few people actually question athletes' working conditions and thus overlook the struggles which characterise many of their lives.

Much of the existing research on sports migration tends to be based on secondary sources, such as newspaper analysis and quantitative surveys, and not direct interviews with the athletes themselves and thus fails to adequately grasp the issues and problems they may face. The views and experiences of professional sportspeople regarding the consequences of globalisation are, therefore, a largely neglected and under-explored area (Maguire & Falcous, 2011; Roderick, 2013; Webster, Lambert, & Beziudenhout, 2008). As Roderick (2013, p.399) has suggested:

To date there has been little discussion by social scientists of the possible latent consequences of such high levels of circulation from a sports work perspective.

Globalisation theorists have been preoccupied with examinations of routes and

pathways, rather than the effects of such volumes of flows on the social selves of those embedded in this industry.

Undoubtedly a key reason behind the relatively sparse amount of academic literature examining the experiences of professional sportspeople is that many are public figures who acquire varying degrees of celebrity status and they do not willingly or easily grant permission for so called ‘unknowns’ to interview them for extended periods (Roderick, 2006b). Also, the lack of research can be attributed to the access problems associated with people who generally lead very busy lives. As such, qualitative data of this type is rare in golf in particular and academic research into elite sport generally. Professional sportspeople are mostly interviewed by journalists, therefore, as with other celebrities, they often confine themselves to prepared sound bites and generalised comments (Roderick, 2006b). They rarely, if ever, grant interviews in which they respond openly to searching questions for a prolonged period of time. That being said, there have been some more empirically based studies that have explored the reality of life as a professional sportsperson (see Molnar & Maguire, 2008; Roderick, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2012, 2013, 2014; Wacquant, 1995, 1998a, 1998b, 2001, 2007, 2011). However, as far as can be reasonably ascertained, there is no sociologically orientated academic literature concerning the workplace experiences of male professional golfers, though Douglas and colleagues have examined female golfers’ careers from a psychological perspective (see Douglas & Carless, 2006, 2008, 2009).

The key focus of this research, therefore, is to explore the ‘real life’ experiences of professional golfers and thus provide a more realistic, or reality-congruent, appraisal of

sport migrants' lives generally. Through interviewing professional golfers themselves it is hoped this study will develop the empirical knowledge base and therefore offer more reliable and valid conclusions in relation to golf and the globalisation debate more generally. This research will also contribute to those studies lacking substantial empirical support and offer an alternative to the research on patterns of global movement generally discussed in the migration literature. As such, this study will focus on the adjustments made during extensive travel rather than the pathways and destinations of professional golfers' migratory trails. Such an approach will help detail the issues and challenges professional golfers encounter when undertaking an international schedule of events and thus contribute to knowledge in this relatively neglected area.

As a lecturer and researcher at the International Institute for Golf Education (IIGE), I have a significant level of access to an existing and established network of player managers who represent golf professionals suitable for interviewing purposes, thus overcoming some of the access problems cited in previous research (Maguire, 2011b). Part of the role of working at IIGE involves undertaking work placements at numerous European Professional Golf Association (EPGA) tour events including: the BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth, England; the Dunhill Links Championship at St Andrews, Scotland; the Castello Masters at Costa Azahar, Spain; and the Iberdrola Open in Son Servera, Majorca. Experiences of being at these events with players offered an insight into the day-to-day realities of a professional golfer, which were characterised by significant levels of stress and differed quite substantially from the common sense perceptions of athletes' lives. Furthermore, being present at events in an official capacity

helped to foster links with players who would be willing to discuss their lives in greater detail during an interview.

Given the large rewards available and the celebrity lifestyles associated with high-profile sporting success, it is unsurprising that a career in elite level sport is considered an attractive proposition for many. Many of the students at IIGE, for example, aspire to become professional golfers on the world tours. As such, the opportunity to produce an in depth study of the reality of golfers' lives proved very appealing. Given the popularity of golf and the number of aspirant professionals in the sport, most of whom will never reach the elite levels, this project offered the opportunity to investigate the experiences of a wide variety of golfers from top players to those who exist mostly out of sight of the glare of the mainstream sports media. Furthermore, this study also provided players themselves with the opportunity to, confidentially, share and discuss the reality of their lives without being judged, which may usually be the case when publicly voicing their opinions. A more adequate explanation of the lives of professional golfers also has the potential to assess and contribute to policy formulation and implementation regarding sport at local, national and global levels (Maguire, 2011b). For example, this research may help to inform elite sports development policy for national governing bodies such as England Golf (EG). Specifically, this could be in relation to the transition from an amateur to professional golfer. Furthermore, by highlighting how professional golfers make sense of their everyday lives it should also be possible to draw wider conclusions about the working lives of other sports professionals, and a variety of highly skilled occupations more generally which have similar non-settler transient migratory patterns,

such as motivational speakers, touring musicians, project managers, and other transient elites. There is a clear need for research of this kind to contribute to the globalisation debate. The above academic and personal experiences helped to shape the ways in which this particular project was designed. In particular, the industry links detailed here enabled me to become involved in the circles of professional golf and develop an ‘insider’ viewpoint, while at the same time it was crucial to maintain a more detached view from the data during the analysis stage (Elias, 1987), an issue explored further in chapter three.

In order to explore the research questions fully, it is important to engage in empirically grounded theoretical research (Bloyce, 2004; Bryman, 2012). To this end, figural sociology provided a framework to facilitate the examination of golfers’ lives with particular emphasis on the dynamic interdependencies between golfers influenced by balances of power. From a figural standpoint, social phenomena can only be appropriately understood by analysing the changing network of relationships which contour the figurations in which people are enmeshed (Green, 2000). It is argued, therefore, that a golfer’s place in their network of figurations contours their workplace experiences. Maintaining a focus on figurations and ensuring this project is directed within their broader social context, it is argued, has helped offer an insight into the social world of professional golfers. The concept of figurations has also illuminated the ways in which power operates within the professional golfer’s network and the constraints which accompany this. It should also be stressed that, at the same time as adopting a figural theoretical framework, this study has been guided by a desire to advance understanding rather than a wish to uphold a particular theoretical perspective. In practice, this involved

a process whereby the empirical data guided the decisions in regards to which figurational concepts were to be used. In other words, the initial emerging themes were used to identify which theoretical concepts are best placed to help understand such issues.

1.3 Structure of the thesis

In order to best address the research questions above, this thesis is set out as follows. Chapter two examines the academic literature relating to sports migration. This involves an attempt to critically assess the theoretical, empirical, and methodological adequacy of literature pertaining to the lived experiences of sport migrants. It is argued that much of the sport migration research focusses on routes and pathways of athletic talent rather than on the effects of movement on professional sportspeople themselves. On the occasions when migration research does draw conclusions on elite athletes' lives it tends to be heavily theorised, offers little empirical evidence to support such notions and, as such, represents what authors think rather than what they have actually found out. Furthermore, the few empirically based studies that have been conducted on sports migration, useful as they are, do not maintain an explicit focus on occupations where constant workplace circulation is a key feature of their job, thus providing a clear rationale for this study. The lives of professional golfers in particular was used as a case study to fill a void in the literature and was analysed from a figurational viewpoint. To this end, chapter three details the theoretical framework of figurational sociology, and outlines how it may prove useful in developing an understanding of the lives of professional sportspeople. More specifically, it explores several sensitising concepts including figurations and interdependence, unplanned processes, differential power

relations, and habitus. Chapter four outlines the research process employed and justifies the main choices made in relation to methodology. More specifically, it details the decisions made on research design, research methods, sampling strategy, and data analysis given the theoretical orientation adopted.

Chapters' five to eight are used to present the main findings and ensuing discussion from the case study data. These chapters attempt to frame the empirical data with the theoretical orientation and previous literature to further an understanding of the lives of professional sportspeople. Chapter five provides key background detail and contextualises the work of professional golfers. This chapter details the scale and structure of the EPGA tour and thus explains how professional golfers' lives have become even more nomadic in recent years. There is also an analysis of factors such as player migration to the United States Professional Golf Association (USPGA) tour which, combined with pressure from sponsors, has led to even further global expansion of golf. More than half of the events on the 2014 EPGA schedule, for example, are now staged outside of Europe. Chapter five also introduces some of the empirical data of this study in analysing the effect of the global flow of EPGA tournaments on players' approaches to the game. More specifically, it is argued that players are exposed to a variety of different playing conditions on an almost weekly basis and are constantly required to adapt to such changes. A number of competing processes – including attempts to standardise course set up and typography of the host country – have led to a diminishing of contrasts while, at the same time, an increasing variety between players' approaches to the game. To make sense of workplaces which are constantly in flux, players are constrained to develop

similar types of play to each other, with an emphasis on hitting long accurate shots, while, at the same time, being required to manage constant varieties of grass types, climates, and altitudes. The key point here is that the work of highly skilled transient migrants is fundamentally the same wherever they are, however, dealing with other people in alien environments means that it is likely they will have to adapt how they approach the technical aspects of their occupation which, in turn, impacts on their social selves.

Chapter six highlights some of the family pressures associated with the transient migration of professional golfers. It is argued that the increasingly global nature of professional golf tournaments means players spend long periods of time away from home and experience intense feelings of loneliness, isolation and perceptions of being cut off from the 'real world'. Professional golfers do not feel isolated in terms of people that they physically have around them, who tend to be many other professionals and tour personnel, but rather in terms of a lack of 'meaningful contact' with people whom they have feelings for. Professional golfers are increasingly constrained to live apart from their families, which requires greater levels of living adjustments. These adjustments leave professional golfers, who are out on tour, as well as their partners, who are back at home, with increased feelings of loneliness and isolation given the time they spend apart.

In chapter seven it is argued that the workplace of professional golfers fosters a culture whereby players begin to adopt, both consciously and subconsciously, the mannerisms, attitudes and behaviours which encourages the development of networks of

temporary group alliances, referred to as 'we-groups'. Professional golfers are constrained to develop we-groups to help reduce the feelings of loneliness in their lives. The strive for players to develop networks with each other constrains them to behave in a manner that is expected of them rather than in a way which reflects their actual emotions, as such these 'friendships' appear to be somewhat superficial. There are pressures on players in these groups to maintain a positive attitude, and avoid moaning, even in the face of poor performances and long periods of time away from their friends and families. In these complex relationships the players are viewed both as 'friends' and 'enemies'. In other words, the relationships between players in friendship networks were characterised by bonds of togetherness and association with particular 'we-groups' while, at the same, showing evidence of tensions and conflict as they are ultimately in direct competition with each other for a share of the overall prize money.

Chapter eight focuses on the ways and extent to which issues of money shape the lives of many players given the financial pressures associated with an international schedule of events. In brief, it is argued that golfers in the higher echelons of the professional game are receiving greater recompense than ever before, both in terms of prize money and sponsorship deals, however, these rewards are available to a relatively small number of players and the majority fare poorly. A closer examination of the network in which players are inescapably involved indicates that the prize breakdown and costs of playing on tour fosters internalised constraints relating to behaviour whereby many golfers 'gamble' on pursuing golf as their main source of income even despite the limited opportunities to make a living out of the game. This 'habitus' is contoured by

others in the golf figuration as professional golfers inevitably struggle to view their social world in a more detached and reality-congruent way.

The interpretation developed across the entire case study enables some general concluding points to be drawn in chapter nine. This final chapter draws together a number of themes raised throughout each section, examines the strengths and limitations of the study and offers some critical reflections on the usefulness of figuration sociology. There is also discussion regarding the implications of the findings for future research in the area of migration more generally. Firstly, it is necessary to analyse the academic literature on the lives of sports migrants.

Chapter 2

The Lives of Highly Skilled Migrants: A Review of Literature

The central role of work and employment in the process of globalisation cannot be underestimated. According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) of the United Nations:

Work is central to people's lives. No matter where they live or what they do, women and men see jobs as the 'litmus test' for the success or failure of globalisation. Work is the source of dignity, stability, peace, and credibility of governments and the economic system (ILO, 2004, p.6).

This quote specifically refers to the reach of multinational corporations, who seek to locate factories and employ workers in countries worldwide, however, Carter (2007) notes that transnational migration of labour, in particular, is an important aspect of the entire constant flow of capital around the world. Despite this, the topic of globalisation and work combined has attracted rather little scholarly interest both in sport and more generally (Webster et al., 2008). Highly skilled labour migration in particular, which professional athletes may be classed as, has been even more neglected academically (Williams et al., 2013). The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to review the literature on employment in relation to globalisation and the migration of professional athletes in particular, however, it will also draw on broader 'work and migration' and 'sport as work' literature where appropriate. Despite the concerns with migration research, the issue of globalisation more generally has attracted much academic attention and has been heavily theorised (Featherstone & Lash, 1995; Guilianotti & Robertson, 2007; Houlihan,

2008; Jarvie, 2006; Maguire, 2011a; Rowe, 2006; Van Bottenburg, 2001; Waters, 1995). However, such research tends not to be empirical and lacks practical application. In other words, these approaches tend to be rather speculative with little supportive data and, as such, it is sometimes difficult to see the usefulness of such research other than in supporting a particular theoretical viewpoint. This review is concerned with more empirically based studies, specifically those conducted on professional sportspeople's experiences of migration and the impact of transnational movements on their wider lives. More specifically, this literature review will focus on the personal difficulties athletes experience during their travelling schedules and the impact of this on their wider lives. For brevity and clarity these issues are presented as a number of themes in this review, however, it is important to stress that all such issues are inextricably linked and do not exist independent of one another. The themes include: issues of culture shock; family impacts; friendship networks; workplace insecurity; and pay and conditions. Before discussing the research conducted on migration, it is first necessary to provide a definition of what constitutes a 'migrant'.

2.1 Defining 'migration'

A 'migrant' is defined as a person who moves from one region, place, or country to another (Collins English Dictionary, 2006). This is a useful start but limited as it is rather vague and does not refer to the specifics of such movements. Stalker (2008) refers specifically to economic migration as the international movement of people in search of jobs. This is not to suggest that migrants only move for work as there are a variety of reasons for migration, such as refugees and asylum seekers who move for welfare issues.

Economic migration is only one form of the broader phenomenon of migration, however, it is an important aspect of people's movement around the globe and a key focus of this project. In this regard, elite sport migrants are simply another example of the highly skilled workers whose movement is reflective of, and reinforcing, the changes concerning an increasing intensification of globalisation processes (Maguire, 2011a; Sklair, 1995; Williams et al., 2013).

Migration is not a new or recent phenomenon. As Stalker (2008, p.10) notes, “no nation on earth can claim always to have lived in the same place”. In other words, each contemporary nation state is simply the product of multiple generations of migrants. The migration of athletes is also not a recent phenomenon but can be traced back to the beginning of the modernisation of sport during industrialisation in the 1860s (Bale & Maguire, 1994; Magee & Sugden, 2002). During the twentieth century, the emergence and diffusion of many sports and the establishment of international sport organisations, competitions, governing bodies – such as the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A), United States Golf Association (USGA), and USPGA and EPGA tours – coupled with the global standardisation of rules governing sports have contributed to modern sport becoming a global spectacle (Maguire, 2011b). This early development initially allowed athletes to migrate more freely and thus become a prominent feature of modern global sports (Maguire, 2011b; Maguire, Jarvie, Mansfield, & Bradley, 2002). As such, it is appropriate to adopt a long-term perspective when exploring issues surrounding globalisation, with greater focus on continuity and change across time and space (Maguire, 2011b). For example, in their work on association football Maguire and

Stead (1998) focus on the long-term involvement of migrants in the game and, more specifically, how the changing nature of employment legislation may help shed light on contemporary experiences of migration. Although not the long-term history advocated by Maguire and Stead (1998), this thesis on professional golf does pay particular attention to *players'* history on tour by highlighting how their unique career trajectories contribute to experiences of globalisation.

Even though migration can be traced back through history, there appears to have been a growing intensity over the past three decades. In that time, flexibility in the transnational labour market has increased and the movement of sportspeople has also increased in terms of scale, pattern and composition (Elliot & Weedon, 2011; Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Maguire, 2011a; Maguire & Falcoux, 2011). A number of broad social dynamics, including changes in technology and a diminishing importance of individual 'place' in a world of global flows have led to an increase in migratory flows (Castells, 1996; Felstead et al., 2005; Urry, 2002; Maguire, 2011a; Williams et al, 2013). In other words, people are less likely to have 'physical' attachments to home given technological advancements which allow for greater travel and communication. In a global economy, the movement of workers between countries, although not particularly frequent in most professions, is not unusual (Williams et al., 2013). In sport, the migration of athletes from one country to another to access more resources – whether they be financial compensation, improved coaching, equipment, and/or support services – is commonplace (Roderick, 2013; Thibault, 2009). Labour migration now appears to be an established feature of the sporting 'global village' with the flow of athletic talent across the globe and

worldwide competitions played in front of people from different nations (Maguire, 2011a, 2011b). Weston (2006, p.88) refers to sports migration as “sports version of free trade”, whereby athletes have the freedom to move internationally with their work. This process not only concerns athletes but also involves coaches, officials, administrators, sport scientists, and others in the sporting network. Furthermore, globalisation and migration are considered interdependent processes whereby the speeding up of migration is linked to an accelerated process of globalisation (Bale & Maguire, 1994; Maguire, 2011b; Stead & Maguire, 2000).

It has been argued that athletes increasingly migrate from one country to another on a “seasonal, residential, or comprehensive basis” (Miller et al., 2001, p.37). However, these closed and discrete classifications offered by Miller et al. (2001), arguing from a cultural studies background, fail to adequately explain the sensitivities of contemporary migration patterns. Rather, there are various dimensions to patterns of sports labour migration and whilst each experience will have similarities they will also be quite different for each migrant and there is no ‘one type’ (Elliot & Maguire, 2008). Some migrants will spend significant periods of time at one location but for others there are seasonal and transitory migration patterns. Indeed, professional sportspeople exhibiting fragmented career paths through a multitude of different countries are becoming more and more frequent (Poli, 2010). For example, Poli (2010, p.1004) identifies that:

During the first semester of the 2009/10 season, 11 of the 151 African players (7.3%) under contract to clubs of the five principle European leagues (England, Germany, Spain, France and Italy) transited through one or more Asian countries

during their career (Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Thailand, China, Lebanon)”.

Poli (2010) added that only 13.9% of players who grew up in Africa had been directly recruited by clubs of the big-five league countries, and that in the other cases players moved via intermediary countries or had been first recruited by clubs in lower divisions in the countries in which the best leagues of the world are located. These statistics appear to show that most of the African footballers have to pass through various leagues in different countries before being able to reach the wealthiest clubs. That said, there does appear to have been a general shift from traditional settler migration – where people spend a significant period of time at a particular location – to the more transient migration of the highly skilled which has been referred to as ‘circulation’ (Maguire, 2011a; Roderick, 2013). Migration trajectories cannot be viewed as linear and one way in nature but are, for some athletes in certain sports, becoming increasingly ‘circuits’ around which people move from one place to another for limited time periods (Bozkurt, 2006; Maguire, 2011a; Roderick, 2013). For example, there are three EPGA tournaments staged in Middle Eastern countries of United Arab Emirates and Qatar during the early parts of the season and thus players will generally play all three events before travelling on. Another contemporary feature of globalisation is the lack of permanence in migratory moves which are becoming characterised as more temporary in nature. For example, the contemporary migration patterns in non-sport, highly skilled orthodox occupations such as advertising, accountancy, banking, law, and information technology (IT), have shifted from traditional ‘settler migration’ to the more ‘transient migration’ fuelled partly by demands from transnational corporations (TNC) to brand and market themselves as

‘world firms’ (Williams et al., 2013). Sporting migrants are no exception to these changes in migratory patterns. Elite sport migrants are simply an example of the highly skilled “enmeshed in local, national, global technological, political and economic state, transnational and transnational corporation policies” (Maguire, 2011a, p.1045). Professional golfers, for example, may find themselves on a travelling tour circuit playing weekly events at locations in different countries and continents. Tennis players, track and field athletes, Grand Prix circuit drivers, skiers, and cyclists also have similar transitory migratory patterns to golfers (Maguire, 2011a). Being mobile for work is a fundamental requirement for those professional athletes who commit to such tours in order to engage in national and global competition (Roderick, 2013). Indeed golf and tennis players, in particular, cross the globe frequently in search of world ranking points and Major/Grand Slam titles. They often spend no more than eight days at each tournament venue and as such golf and tennis players have been described as “nomads” of the sporting world with constantly shifting workplaces and places of residence (Maguire, 2011b, p.1104).

The growing number of sport migrants travelling the globe has raised numerous questions and the area has been given more academic attention over the last 20 years (Bale & Maguire, 1994; Maguire & Falcous, 2011; Roderick, 2013). This research on migration has centred on a number of themes, including:

- What sports are most affected by globalisation and why are they affected?
(see Carter, 2011; Klein, 2006; Poli, 2010).
- What are the patterns of global migration and why have they developed in such a way? (see Maguire & Stead, 1998; Poli, 2010).

- What has been the impact on fans? (see Bowers, 2003; Conn, 1997; Elliott & Maguire, 2008; Falcous & Maguire, 2005).
- What has been the impact on ‘host’ and ‘donor’ countries in the migration process? (see Darby, 2002; Darby, Akindes & Kirwin, 2007; Elliot & Weedon, 2011; Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Grainger, 2006; Klein, 2006; Maguire, 1994; Maguire et al., 2002).
- Why do professional sportspeople become migrants and what are their experiences? (see Magee & Sugden, 2002; Poli, 2010; Roderick, 2013; Stead & Maguire, 2000).
- In what ways does sports migration reflect the migration of highly skilled workers generally? (see Carter, 2011; Elliott & Maguire, 2008).
- What implications are there for sport policy? (see Houlihan, 2008; Maguire, 2011a).

Furthermore, migration research has been conducted on a variety of sports including: baseball (see Chiba, 2004; Takahashi & Horne, 2006; Bloyce, 2008; Bloyce & Murphy, 2008); basketball (see Maguire, 1988a, 1994; Olin, 1984); cricket (see Hill, 1994; Maguire & Stead, 1996; Stead & Maguire, 1998); football (see Lanfranchi & Taylor, 2001; Magee & Sugden, 2002; Maguire & Pearton, 2000a; Maguire & Pearton, 2000b; Maguire & Stead, 1998; McGovern, 2002; Poli, 2010; Stead & Maguire, 2000; Roderick, 2013); handball (see Agergaard, 2008); ice hockey (see Maguire, 1996); and rugby (see Collins, 2000; Moorhouse, 1994; Williams, 1994). However, even despite

such research there still appears to be many gaps in the literature where numerous issues are yet to be addressed.

There has been increasing investigation into migration and several main themes have emerged, however, much of the research is heavily theoretical and very few empirical studies have been conducted, thus the practical application of the research is often overlooked. From a figurational perspective, research should always be viewed as a balance between theory and data and this project on professional golfers aims to fill the void with regard to empirically grounded theoretical research in the area. More specifically, there has been little analysis on the experiences of migration amongst professional athletes where constant workplace circulation is a key feature of their job. There has also been little attention specifically to the sport of golf. Furthermore, migration research has tended to focus on western sports with few examples of experiences in Far Eastern states (such as Chiba, Ebihara, & Morino, 2001; West, Chiba, Ebihara, & Morino, 2001). Research concerning migrants in professional golf, whose trail often covers many countries in the Far East, is therefore particularly useful in contributing to this underdeveloped area. Although it should also be acknowledged that all the participants in this study were Western golfers. It is not possible to cover every aspect of sport labour migration research in this review so a spotlight will be kept on players' experiences of migration. Firstly, it is necessary to offer some critical observations on the common sense and ideological assumptions frequently drawn between the 'opportunities' and 'threats' from growing levels of migration.

2.2 Ideological and common sense views of labour migration

The intensification of globalisation processes and the associated increase in migration between countries has been portrayed, by some, as free from problems and reflecting advantageous market positions where people have more individual choice, flexibility, and rights to move (Ohmae, 1995). For Ohmae (1995), arguing from a broadly functionalist perspective, a global world is one which is free from social division between people and characterised by freedom, choice, and liberalisation. To migrate as part of the broader global sports process has also been described as something to celebrate and viewed in unproblematic terms by Mountford (1997). Sklair (2001) also paints the picture that highly skilled migrants are the drivers and beneficiaries of globalisation. However, all these broad brush viewpoints fail to account for individual diversity between migrants and a more detached critical observation indicates that experiences of globalisation are complex and unique to each person. The process of migration, therefore, should be viewed as both “unifying, universalizing, progressive and liberating” at the same time as “divisive, fragmenting, constraining and destructive of local cultures” (Maguire, 2011a, p.24). Similarly, Brohm (1978, p.77) argues from a Marxist perspective, that global sport spreads capitalist ideologies including the “myth of the superman, individualism, social advancement, success, and efficiency” while at the same time constraining people to a set hierarchy. In other words, global sport *can* be viewed as a progressive and liberating process which opens up the potential for greater human contact, dialogue and cross border movements and encourages the spread of human rights and democracy. However, at the same time, modern sport is viewed as being symptomatic of a consumer dominated form of western capitalism which brings with it a number of unintended impacts (Scott,

2002). Robins (1997, p.15) refers to the “asymmetrical nature of migration” and draws a distinction between the mobility of “high flying business elites” and the mass movement of refugees or economic migrants, whose movement is brought on by need or despair. Similarly, Miller et al. (2003, p.430) contrast privileged sports “labour cosmopolitans”, who experience significant financial rewards and ease of geographical mobility, with the “huge army of labour and ancillary workers that is subject to massive exploitation”. Increased migration has enabled footballers such as African player Didier Drogba, for example, to use their sporting talent to become global stars earning vast sums of money, however, there are large numbers of aspiring players who have tried but failed to replicate this experience (Poli, 2010). The perspectives offered by Robins (1997) and Miller et al. (2003) are useful in highlighting the different experiences of labour migration, however, using terms such as ‘asymmetrical’ and ‘contrast’ they paint a picture of a clear division between those who benefit from increased migration and those who do not. From a figurational viewpoint, such dualisms are considered to be a false dichotomy and the individual experiences of migration should be viewed as even more complex than an either/or scenario. For example, those who are considered to ‘benefit’ from increased levels of migration may experience the ‘negative’ effects of it at the same time (Maguire, 2011a). Similarly, Roderick (2013, p.400) explains that the outcomes of increased job flexibility are “double-edged” for all athletes. According to Ley (2004, p.151), even elite highly skilled workers such as professional sportspeople, who are often thought to benefit from increasing levels of migration, are “themselves vulnerable to some of the insecurities and transience that are typically associated with unskilled work”.

Sporting migration is often viewed as favourable to athletes because it allows access to higher levels of talent and improved resources, however it is not without problems for the athletes themselves (Thibault, 2009). The international movement of sports stars such as David Beckham has been used to indicate the supposed positives of migration, however, Roderick (2013, p.398) argues that for many the experiences of occupational mobility in football does “not portray choice, freedom, player agency and distinct career paths: far from it” and adds that player movements would be better viewed as a “complex mixture of relational and temporal constraint, obligations to family, and structural and economic priorities”. Therefore, for professional sportspeople, migratory channels have both enabling and constraining tendencies, which offer both opportunities and constraints (Maguire, 2011b). Increased migration allows for players to be able to take their chances abroad while, at the same time, migrant athletes may “face serious professional and personal challenges” when undertaking their work in different countries (Molnar & Maguire, 2008, p.75). It could also be argued that professional golfers, perhaps only in comparison with professional tennis players, experience the greatest number of different cultures given their regular moving from one country to another for tournaments on an almost weekly basis, which is accompanied by a number of impacts. This argument will now proceed by analysing the ‘culture shock’ which is sometimes associated with migration.

2.3 Issues of ‘culture shock’

According to Maguire (2011a), although some sport migrants may find the move from one country to another relatively problem free, for many this is not the case. The

reality is such that working in different locations can lead to varying degrees of cultural adjustment and dislocation which, in extreme circumstances, has even been described as a process of exploitation (Darby et al., 2007; Donnelly & Petherick, 2004; Maguire, 2011b; Platts & Smith, 2009). Furthermore, many professional sportspeople lack knowledge of different cultures and athletes are unaware of how travelling with their work may affect them personally (Agergaard, 2008). In a study examining foreign players' experiences in Danish handball, Agergaard (2008) argues that on arrival in Denmark players were met with a social reality that differed greatly from their expectations. The motives of professional sportspeople to migrate is often for reasons other than to experience different cultures, however, by definition, this is the very thing that happens when players ply their trade in foreign countries (Agergaard, 2008).

Initially, encounters between people from different countries may raise problems such as communication (Maguire, 2011a). In a study on the migration of Hungarian footballers, Molnar and Maguire (2011a) argue that language is a concern for many players in a foreign country but becomes less of an issue once they learn the necessary words and phrases, which usually happens during the early stages of working within that country. This said, it has also been argued that migrants' experiences of language barriers can, in some cases, affect migratory patterns with some athletes favouring countries where language barriers are less problematic (Agergaard, 2008; Elliot & Maguire, 2008). For example, Agergaard (2008) argues that players sharing the same language and cultural background are more likely to develop friendships, become accustomed to their new surroundings, and integrate and settle in better than those from different

backgrounds. It is also argued that individual well-being is often more related to whether or not the foreign players share the same language and cultural backgrounds than to their sporting performances (Agergaard, 2008). If sport migrants are not ‘accepted’ by their teams, because of language and cultural differences, a level of hostility can develop between players and/or fans more generally¹ (Maguire & Falcou, 2005). Migrants’ reception in the host country is often contoured by the local contexts in which the sport is played and/or consumed by supporters. The work by Agergaard (2008), Elliot and Maguire (2011a), Molnar and Maguire (2008), and Maguire and Falcou (2005), however, is solely focussed on the experience of migrants moving to new locations to be part of a team thus fails to adequately account for individual sports with constant workplace circulation, such as golf and tennis.

As time passes sport migrants generally overcome initial language difficulties, however, they may develop feelings of loneliness and isolation by being exposed to a different cultural environment (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). Individual feelings of loneliness and isolation appear to have increased generally in recent times and have been linked with the growth of increasingly complex industrialised societies (Franklin, 2009). Of particular concern as far as this argument is concerned is the loneliness which has been associated with, specifically, the growing international flow of labour migration

¹Player and fan hostility towards migrant athletes has been extensively linked with the concept “brain drain” and “brawn drain” (see Darby, 2002; Darby et al., 2007; Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Elliot & Weedon, 2011; Grainger, 2006; Klein, 2006; Maguire, 1994; Maguire, 2011b; Maguire et al., 2002). Brain drain refers to the notion that an increase in sport migration has a detrimental effect on the sporting talent of the migrants’ country of origin. For example, the more successful African footballers tend to leave their country and play at various locations around Europe. The focus of this review, and the purpose of this study more generally, however, is to maintain a spotlight on migrant experiences and not the effects of migration on sporting talent.

work which can bring with it an increased withering of original ties between social groups (Williams et al., 2013). In other words, the growing international movement of people has led to a significant increase in the prevalence of people feeling like they are on their own. The increasing propensity for people to be on their own in modern industrialised societies is often viewed in two ways: firstly, there is pride associated with perceived independence, freedom, and the ability to act responsibly on their own and defend for themselves (Williams et al., 2013), however, there is an alternative view that suggests that many perceive themselves as being ‘cut off’ from others which leads to a range of negative feelings associated with people being on their own, such as isolation and loneliness (Franklin, 2009). The terms ‘loneliness’ and ‘isolation’ are often taken to be the same thing and used to describe a scenario whereby individuals are viewed as completely separate from other people. From a figurational perspective, however, people are considered to be interdependent with each other and therefore loneliness can only be understood in reference to relationships with others as people are, in the real sense, never in total isolation. The loneliness experienced by sports migrants, therefore, may be more adequately conceptualised as the result of their perceived relationship with other people (Maguire, 2011a). This does not mean, however, that these feelings of loneliness are any less powerful. Indeed sport migrants’ feelings of isolation can foster extremely distorted self-images of themselves as total individuals which can result in very real feelings of loneliness and isolation (Agergaard, 2008; Maguire, 2011a; Molnar & Maguire, 2008; Roderick, 2014). Research by Molnar and Maguire (2008) and Agergaard (2008) indicates that many sport migrants often experience feelings of loneliness and isolation, however, this is explained solely in terms of reasons and motives for the athletes moving.

In other words, feelings of loneliness are cited as reasons for athletes wishing to relocate with their work and no explanations are given for why athletes are in fact lonely. This argument will build on previous research by analysing actual experiences of loneliness in professional golfers' lives. Research on professional boxing by Wacquant, arguing from a Bourdieusian perspective, describes loneliness as a 'cost' of the dedication athletes are required to have in their chosen sport (Wacquant, 1998a). More specifically, Wacquant (1998a, p.341) includes the following quote from professional boxer Muhammad Ali:

The hardest part of the training is the loneliness. I just sit here like a little animal in a box at night. I can't go out in the street and mix with the folks out there 'cause they wouldn't be out there if they was up to any good. I can't do nothing except sit ... Here I am, surrounded by showgirls, whiskey and nobody is watching me. All this temptation and me trying to train to be a boxer. It's something to think about.

Wacquant's (1998a) work is useful in highlighting the loneliness which elite sports athletes may endure during times of training, however, it presents professional boxers as being completely 'cut off' from the outside world. From a figurational standpoint, people are never totally cut off and loneliness can only be understood in direct relation to the wider network to which professional sportspeople are inextricably enmeshed. The concept of loneliness, therefore, can only be viewed in terms of a variety of degrees, or levels.

It has been argued that in certain cases sports migration could be described as an exploitative process (Darby, 2001; Darby et al., 2007; Donnelly & Petherick, 2004;

Klein, 1991; Maguire, 2011a, 2011b; Miller et al., 2001; Platts & Smith, 2009; Thaiburn, 2009). From such a viewpoint, the same exploitative labour practices which are typically associated with mass labour migration more generally also take place in the global movement of sports workers. For example, the recruitment and retention of African and East European football players in the Premier League has been described as a form of “child and/or human trafficking” (Maguire, 2011a, p.1042). It is argued many of these football migrants receive lower wages and poorer conditions than their European Union counterparts (Darby et al., 2007; Platts & Smith, 2009). For example, many of the young Africans who are recruited to what has been described as the “clearing house” of football in Belgium subsequently fail and end up living on the streets and parks of Brussels (Maguire, 2011a, p.1046). Arguments concerning exploitation have generally been associated with the movement of athletes from developing countries where talented sport athletes are exported to more developed countries but then abandoned if they do not make the grade (Darby, 2001; Klein, 1991; Thaiburn, 2009). For Miller et al. (2001), having saturated the domestic supply of good athletes and increased local players’ salaries, sports organisations spread throughout the world increasingly in search of cheap talent. These sport migrants in this process are described as “labouring bodies” who are “selected, trained, disciplined, bought, sold, monitored, invaded, celebrated, desired, and despised” (Miller et al., 2001, p.31). This can result in global sport becoming a “law unto itself” and multinational sports corporations, in a similar fashion to multinational corporation activity beyond sport, not applying labour laws and conditions as required, which negatively impacts on the migrant experience (Miller et al., 2001, p.24). For example, there is evidence of United States (US) Major League Baseball franchises

failing to comply with local government regulations regarding the hiring of players from foreign countries (Miller et al., 2001). It is argued that in some cases they actively discourage potential third world recruits from attending school, not allowing agents – whose bargaining tools have become increasingly important for the rights of the sportspeople involved – all of which has led to a major increase in players from the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico, Venezuela, and Mexico (Miller et al., 2001).

The argument launched so far in this section adds to the sport migration debate by raising a number of questions concerning the experiences of migrants which may, in extreme circumstances, be described as human trafficking. For example in some cases athletes with preferred somatotypes are being identified as early as possible, then selected, trained, and monitored by psychologists, physiologists, biomechanists, and physiotherapists (Miller et al., 2001). However, such research does not highlight which sports this may be and thus their conclusions are drawn from what authors think rather than what they have found out. This current project on professional golf aims to provide an empirically based study to test such assumptions. Furthermore, in reality it is likely that experiences of sport migrants are both exploitive and liberating, at the same time, across various different individuals (Maguire, 2011a). This section has highlighted that sport migrants are increasingly required to cope with accommodating foreign cultures and traditions and detailed the associated feelings this may bring. Arguably, sports such as golf and tennis, which, firstly, are more ‘individual’ in nature than many other sports and, secondly, require constant geographic circulation, involve even greater differentiation of cultural communication and interaction among players, officials, the

crowd, and others, thus providing further justification for this study. At the same time, it is also important to recognise that this ‘interaction’ in the local setting is, at least, temporary in golf. That is, if a footballer struggles with language and culture in a given place he is now plying his trade, this is quite different because he has to stay there until he gets a contract elsewhere – whereas a golfer has to cope for a week, at most. Even so, all professional sport migrants are often required to experience the culture shock associated with travel in the absence of family, to which the focus of this review will now turn.

2.4 The families of professional athletes

The families of professional athletes have become a more central focus in the media spotlight during the past 10 years (Clayton & Harris, 2004; Ortiz, 2006; Roderick, 2012; Rubinstein & Lansisky, 2013). In some cases athletes and their families have achieved very high levels of celebrity status, such as David and Victoria Beckham, with their personal lives coming under significant scrutiny (Clayton & Harris, 2004). There appears, however, to be little academic research on professional sportspeople’s families from the perspective of the sportsperson themselves and the media accounts tend to focus almost exclusively on the celebrity aspects of their existence rather than the real substance of family life (Clayton & Harris, 2004). Indeed, Williams et al. (2013) argue that future research is required on the negative consequences of transnational employment for both employees and their families. Similarly, the issue of family dislocation through migration has been described as “evoking a range of potentially emotive encounters” and thus warrants further investigation (Falcous & Maguire, 2005,

p.139). This section, therefore, will outline the literature pertaining to sportspeople and their family lives.

Shin and Nam (2004) argue that some young, aspiring professional sportspeople may actually delay starting a family in order to focus on their career in sport first. In their study on female Korean golf professionals who had migrated to pursue a career on the United States Ladies Professional Golf Association tour (USLPGA), many players chose to delay entering relationships and starting a family in order to allow greater focus on their career. For example, Si Ri Pak, arguably Korea's most successful female golfer, said when starting on tour that movies and boyfriends were "ten years from now. Golf now, that later" (Shin & Nam, 2004, p.234). Such player views and career motives are linked to a Korean culture where, it is argued, people are more long-term in their focus (Shin & Nam, 2004). More specifically, it is argued that Korean people grow up in "agrarian societies" which "are futuristic in their mindset, looking forward to the future harvest", adding that a "parent's unreserved sacrifice is done with the fruition of their children's futures in mind. The Korean golfer approaches golf with the same attitude. Every ounce of energy is placed in preparation of their career goals" (Shin & Nam, 2004, p.234). In other words, motivation for a 'harvest for future gains' in the sport of professional golf is evident in the attitudes of young Korean players (Shin & Nam, 2004). Useful as this research is in highlighting that players may delay starting a family to focus on their careers, it offers a very simplistic and all-encompassing view of the motives of all Korean players. A figurational standpoint eschews such simplistic explanations which paint people's lives as a series of planned events. In reality, it is likely player motives,

both in Korea and beyond, are many and varied and the outcome not solely in the hands of the player themselves but rather the result of a number of unplanned processes. However, the main purpose of this section of the literature review is to focus primarily on migration research conducted with sportspeople who *do* have families.

Starting a family has been described as a life changing experience which requires significant readjustment for the individuals involved (Kerr & Håkan, 2000). Arguably, the growing flow of sport labour requires even greater levels of family adjustment given the international movements required, perhaps the most significant of which is changes in family living arrangements. As Maguire and Stead (2008) and Roderick (2013) observe some migrant athletes are required, often with little choice, to leave behind their families, cultures and a part of their personal and social identities in order to pursue their careers abroad. In the hope of obtaining more money, prestige and/or professional advancement, migrants often have to cope with foreign cultures and traditions in the absence of their family (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). Professional sportspeople are required to learn quickly how to live without their extended, and even close, family and the comforts of home while abroad (Molnar & Maguire, 2008).

Research on professional handball found family ties an important influence on whether players would stay overseas on a permanent or temporary basis (Agergaard, 2008). In particular, the sport migrants interviewed by Agergaard (2008) stressed the perceived importance of staying near to their family or returning home whenever possible. It is, however, not always possible for sport migrants to return home on a

regular basis which, often means that the athlete must decide whether to relocate their family, commute to and from the family home, or ultimately whether they are required to live apart. Molnar and Maguire (2008) argue that such decisions are many and varied but largely dependent on the age, career level, and relative commitment of the athlete in question. Migrants' experiences regarding family, therefore, differ given career and life cycles. For example, it is argued that at the outset of players' careers, usually at a relatively young age, the support of a stable partner can be advantageous and provide a sense of home and security if they travel together (Molnar & Maguire, 2008; Ortiz, 2006). Bruegel (1996) and Ortiz (2006) refer to this as a 'trailing spouse', where the partners of professional sportspeople specifically 'follow' wherever their partner's work may take them. It is also argued by Ortiz (1997, p.226), in work on National Football League (NFL) players from a symbolic interactionist perspective, that travelling wives may be a "source of stability for their married ballplayers, which may make them more productive". This said, it appears to be that many young sportspeople actually avoid more serious relationships in order to concentrate on their careers. Indeed, according to Molnar and Maguire (2008, p.80), particularly at the latter stage of migrants' careers the presence of "family and children can be a hindrance" and place higher levels of stress on the individual as it is much more difficult for the entire family to relocate than it is for a more independent individual who has no direct family obligations. According to Ortiz (1997), players' families and children often, where funding permits, travel with them up until the age that schooling is required when it becomes much more problematic. In addition to childcare considerations, the constant moving and resettling that is a key feature of work in professional sport can lead to further difficulties for players' partners and families if

they do attempt to ‘trail’ the sportsperson (Ortiz, 1997). More specifically, difficulties associated with partners’ ability to settle in and feelings of homesickness was specifically cited (Ortiz, 1997). Also in the NFL, O’Toole (2006) found that constant geographical labour mobility may lead players and their family members to experience a lack of ‘rootedness’ in terms of their ‘work’ and ‘home’ life relations. In other words, there was little sense of permanence and place in their surroundings for all involved which invoked a number of negative feelings. Work on association football also found that relocating repeatedly, which can often be for very short durations, can be particularly unsettling for the families of players (Carter, 2007; Roderick, 2012). The issues outlined here, including childcare considerations and issues of homesickness, leave players in situations where they and their families are required to reconsider their living arrangements and many are required to live apart from each other, if not completely, then for large chunks of time.

It has also been argued that the increased labour mobility in sport has brought about changes in traditional partnerships and the associated household living arrangements (Roderick, 2012). The cultural norm that married couples live together and the notion that partners generally follow where the work takes them, such as the ‘trailing spouse’ referred to here, is historically grounded in the West (Williams et al., 2013). However, the work of contemporary professional sportspeople appears increasingly to deviate from this tradition and often requires separate work and living apart arrangements. For example, there is evidence that contemporary professional footballers and their wives are increasingly part of what has been termed ‘living apart together’ (LAT) relationships (Roderick, 2013). Roderick (2013, p.402) arguing from a symbolic

interactionist approach, suggests there is a “considerable weight of anecdotal evidence emerging from player (auto)biographies, newspaper articles and other media forums that highlights the trend that players’ wives no longer offer so readily classic examples of ‘trailing wives’”. Rather than ‘trailing’ their footballing husbands from one location to the next, it is argued that migrants’ wives are becoming more likely to stay at a fixed location and use telephones and social media, for example, to keep in touch. There are a number of competing factors which contribute to players living apart from their families. Such decisions are not made in isolation. Ortiz (2006) cites the reasons which, bar the occasional trip, contribute to families not travelling with players as: childcare responsibilities, the expenses of travelling, and in some cases the jobs or careers of the partner themselves. As Ortiz (2006) alludes, this is often not a one way decision made by the players alone but must be understood in relation to competing kin obligations and sensitivities, and economic issues. Players’ partners, for example, are said to contour players’ experiences and ultimately guide their choices regarding migration and they often come to resolve job-relocation choices together (Roderick, 2012). Furthermore, professional sportspeople are often required to respect the personal requirements and desires of partners and children when considering certain job moves (Roderick, 2012). This seems to, however, contribute to players being increasingly constrained to spend large periods of time living apart from their families, leaving their partners at home often bringing up their family without them, which raises a number of issues.

A study by Ley (2004) highlights that the increased mobility of highly skilled workers entails costs as well as benefits and such workers are certainly not free from

vulnerabilities. Drawing from interviews with businessmen migrating from Canada to South East Asia for work, the transnational living arrangements involved meant living apart from their families as they engage in the ‘pacific shuttle’ between sites (Ley, 2004). Such arrangements apparently place a “heavy social burden” on the families themselves (Ley, 2004, p.151). One interviewee from Ley’s (2004) research described the situation in the following terms:

I travelled back and forth, coming to Vancouver four times a year for 2-4 weeks. At first you try not to remember but then the intimate feeling is lost. Living apart is very difficult and divorce obvious. I really regret it and advise others against being an ‘astronaut’ family.

Similarly, Carter (2007, p.372) draws attention to the “unfortunate consequence of transnational sport migration, the real and potential damage done to migrant families resulting from migrant athletes leaving their homes”. The partners of professional sportspeople, for example, are required to “deal with their husband’s routines and extended absences from home because of work-related travel” (Ortiz, 2006, p.528). If players’ families live at home while players migrate to work then their families are generally not isolated in terms of ‘social rootedness’, as they are often within a familiar environment with other family members and friends, and the familiarity of local schools. However, they may express feelings of loneliness and isolation in terms of time away from their partners (Ortiz, 2006). For those migrant workers with children, their partners are, in many ways, living the life of a single parent typically spending long periods of time at home taking care of the children and completing chores, whilst their partner works and lives elsewhere (Thompson, 1999). Given professional golf requires constant

circulation of workplace it is particularly difficult for players' families to travel with them, and raises the likelihood of their partners having to effectively perform the role of a single-parent.

At this point, it is necessary to review the literature specifically referring to the work/life balance between professional sportspeople's work and home family lives. As has been highlighted, professional sportspeople are often required to spend large periods of time away from their families, however, even when players are at home, sport work and family life are not considered separate but rather there is considerable overlap. In other words, the public work of a professional sportsperson is not viewed as separate to the so-called 'private' aspects of their lives. Research on the work/life balance of professional sportspeople, and highly pressurised jobs more generally, has highlighted how people struggle to break from work related issues in their wider lives (Finch, 1983; Ortiz, 2006; Roderick, 2012). Ortiz (2006) argues that professional sport can come to define the lives of the sportspeople involved, who rarely leave their work at the workplace and often struggle to 'switch off'. Professional sportspeople have high visibility both inside and outside of the workplace which often leads to a high level of self-consciousness (Roderick, 2006a). This 'work spill' into people's wider lives can be problematic not just for the individual but also their significant others (Patricia, Moen, & Batt, 2003). In this respect, the partners of professional sportspeople experience some of the consequences of being a sportsperson but without being paid (Roderick, 2012). The work of professional sport spills over into marriage and family lives as boundaries are not

clearly defined and players' partners are required to manage and cope with the sport-work associated activities and pressures (Roderick, 2012).

Closely related to the issue of work spill are 'career-dominated marriages' which are often found in professional occupations such as medicine, religion, law enforcement, entertainment, military, academia, business, and politics (Oppenheimer, 2003), in addition to elite level sports (Finch, 1983; Ortiz, 2006). Career dominated marriages describe a scenario whereby employment in highly pressurised workplaces infiltrates into the lives of the employee and their partner to a level where they *both* become defined by the work. Sport work becomes a significant part of both of their lives and can impact on their relationship. Ortiz (2006, p.521) specifically highlights the sport marriage as an excellent example of "career-dominated marriage". From this viewpoint, professional athletes are considered to be 'married' to their work and as a consequence the partner in question is also married to the work of professional sport (Finch, 1983; Heller & Watson, 2005; Ortiz, 2006; Roderick, 2012). Career dominated marriages have also been referred to as 'control work', whereby professional sportspeople attempt to control elements outside the actual day-to-day aspects of professional sport for their own gains in the sport itself (Ortiz, 2006). Ortiz (2006, p.528) specifically defines control work as:

A process by which partners use interactional strategies in their efforts to control resources or access to resources, control each other, control a situation, or cope with family, marital, and occupational stressors through control attempts and the use of control tactics for some desired control outcome.

Furthermore, the wives of some professional sportspeople may be reliant on their partners economically and thus the sportsperson has an even greater position of power and influence over the other (Roderick, 2012). Ortiz (2006, p.528) adds that the “wives of professional athletes represent an extraordinary composite ... which require them to support and defer to their husbands’ high-profile, high-status, high-income, and high-stress occupations”. Similarly, and also in the NFL, McKensie (1999, p.234) quotes the wife of a player who said “in the world where I lived most of my life, I was an afterthought at best, and my existence was acknowledged only because of my connection to my NFL husband”. In the same vein in a documentary analysis of the lives of footballers wives, Clayton and Harris (2004) argue that the results connect media portrayals of, and narratives about, the image of football players’ partners with the social reproduction of masculine hegemony via maintaining focus on the role of beautiful, erotic and yet devoted and supportive, women. This ‘work spill’ into professional sportspeople’s lives can, at times, cause issues for all people in the family. For example, Robidoux (2001) highlights that the conditions of work for professional ice hockey players places significant economic and emotional constraints on the lives of all those involved in family relationships. Furthermore, professional sport can feature heavily in the minds and daily timetables of the family members of sportspeople who must learn to accommodate this ‘intrusion’ into their lives, their requirements, wishes and self-identities, the upshot of which may be irregular, unpredictable and dislocated lifestyles for all (Ortiz, 1997; O’Toole, 2006; Roderick, 2012). In other words, it seems that the work of sport often infiltrates into all areas of sportspeople and their family’s lives thus defining the entire relationship.

Sportspeople and their families are often exposed to significant levels of intrusion into their daily lives by the media (Roderick, 2012). Furthermore, the private lives of wives and partners of sportspeople are often viewed as aspects for public entertainment. In other words, it is often taken as 'normal practice' for the media to comment on the so called 'private' aspects of professional sportspeople's lives. Roderick (2012, p.318) specifically refers to professional football which is frequently viewed as a "matter for public consumption" where "journalists and public commentators can remark openly and guilt free about problems such as marital breakdown, and issues connected with personal health and loss". The partners of professional sportspeople are often also in the public eye and thus required to cope with invasions of privacy and media scrutiny given the level of celebrity associated with the sportsperson in question (Ortiz, 2006). The accounts from Ortiz presented here broadly argue that the wives of professional sportspeople exercise little control over, and do not attempt to challenge aspects of their partners' lives. Furthermore, it is argued that wives serve a discrete 'function' in the player's life. A figurational perspective eschews the notion of one way exploitive relationships of this type. The relationship between sportspeople and their families could more adequately be viewed as a balance of power which changes from one scenario to the next rather than the static scenario presented by Ortiz. This said, it does appear that the networks of relationships in which players and their partners are embedded do constrain their ability to exercise choice free from the obligations and expectancies of the work of professional sport. However this is then further developed by Roderick (2012) who considers the athlete-partner relationship not as a one way 'controlling' relationship, but rather, he

argues, the wives of professional sportspeople have a degree of power to shape the overall outcome of their lives. For example, some of the partners of professional footballers challenged the seemingly accepted code of behaviours for footballers' partners (Roderick, 2012).

Much of the research outlined in this section exclusively interviewed the wives of professional athletes (see Finch, 1983; McKensie, 1999; Ortiz, 1997, 2006), and not the players themselves, and thus the viewpoints of players can only be taken as 'suggestive'. The result is that this research does, in places, draw conclusions regarding the lives of players themselves based on what their partners have said. This study on professional golf builds on and contributes to previous studies in the area, which have exclusively interviewed athletes' wives to reveal how the athletes *themselves* make sense of such relationship pressures. Furthermore, much of the literature is based on a documentary analysis of popular journalistic texts. For example, Clayton and Harris (2004) analysed the media coverage of some of the partners associated with professional football players in England by conducting a textual analysis of multiple media sources. Again such research, useful as it is as a starting point, fails to offer views of the professional athlete themselves. Furthermore, there are no studies on marriages and relationships between professional sportspeople and their partners in sports which require constant circulation as part of their work, such as professional golf, which may cause different kinds of pressure. It should be stressed, however, that the intention of this thesis was not to interview the partners of professional golfers but rather to encourage players to discuss the impacts of a global schedule on their family lives from their own perspective.

This section of the literature review has outlined a variety of pressures associated with the wider family lives of professional sportspeople. There is an overwhelming view that the work of professional sport can place significant stress on players' relationships with their partners. Unsurprisingly, it has also been argued that the accumulation of such pressures can lead to extramarital affairs and/or relationship breakdowns (Ortiz, 2006; Sanderson & Clavio, 2010). For example, in a study on ice hockey, Robidoux (2001, p.155, as cited in Roderick, 2012) quotes a player who clearly articulates the pressures professional sport can place on relationships:

Well, you know, to be quite frank, it [hockey] probably cost me one marriage. I mean I'm remarried again. And you know I'm willing to accept that my first wife couldn't handle what hockey brought. Because once I got traded, from Atlantis, where I was living, things seemed to fall apart ... So you know – yes, there is no doubt that it puts a lot of strain on being away all the time ... It does put a strain on your family.

Given the pressures placed on the family lives of professional athletes it is also unsurprising that extramarital affairs and infidelity may occur. It is argued that athletes' engagement in infidelity is not a new phenomenon and rather professional sport is characterised, by some, with high levels of affairs in relationships (Ortiz, 2006; Sanderson & Clavio, 2010). More specifically, Ortiz (2006) refers to NFL players who spend periods of time away on tour where much of this infidelity is said to occur, according to the wives of players who were interviewed. Similarly, Stark (2006) argues that increased mobility in sport actually serves to increase levels of divorce. The

pressures which arise from players and families living apart often places significant strain on relationships and makes separation an increasing likelihood for some (Sanderson & Clavio, 2010; Stark, 2006).

Ortiz (2006) explains the behaviour of professional athletes by referring to ‘spoilt athlete syndrome’, a phrase conceived by the wives of professional athletes that Ortiz interviewed. It is argued that from a young age, male athletes particularly, develop over inflated feelings of male entitlement and commit infidelity in order to fulfil their increased need of “male self” (Ortiz, 2006, p.540). This infidelity while away on tour is not just tolerated but even encouraged by the peer group with players who commit such acts being described as a “real man” or “one of us” by fellow athletes (Ortiz, 1997, p.227). Again, it should be stressed that this is from the assumed perspective of the partners as no interviews were conducted with the players themselves. Furthermore, it is argued that players do not consider the feelings of their partners in regard to these actions. Rather, the partners of professional footballers are viewed not as women with lives and minds of their own but merely as ‘tools’ for increasing the players’ self-esteem (Ortiz, 2006). From a female perspective some individuals choose to ignore the kinds of activities that happen while their partners are away on tour. They may opt to stay home and try to avoid hearing from others that athletes are having extramarital affairs on the road (Ortiz, 1997). In this way, as a form of collective denial, they can maintain their ignorance (Ortiz, 1997). The argument presented by Ortiz appears a rather simplistic explanation which focusses on the working conditions and male ego of the professional athlete. From a figurational perspective, the high rates of separation and divorce in sport

should not be reduced to explanations of player infidelity only, but rather the result of a number of factors. Player infidelity may be one major factor, however, explanations should be more focused on the variety of different, sometimes very personal, explanations. There are likely to be a number of multi-causal reasons which contribute to the breakdown of relationships and it is not the purpose of this review to provide a detailed analysis of such issues. However, it can be adequately concluded from the literature presented in this section that the life of a professional sportsperson places a number of pressures on the athlete-partner relationship. The focus of this review now turns to an analysis of the types of friendships which develop between sport migrants.

2.5 Sport migration and friendship networks

The work of a sport migrant not only impacts on family lives but also on the development and maintenance of friendships. The purpose of this section, therefore, is to analyse the literature pertaining to sport migrants and their friends. The significance of what has been referred to as ‘friendship networks’ has been examined in sport labour migration research (Bale, 1991; Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Molnar & Maguire, 2008a; Roderick, 2006a) and broader employment literature (Conradson & Latham, 2005; Meyer, 2001; Voigt-Graf, 2005; Yeoh & Willis, 2005). Research in sport has tended to focus on friendship networks in terms of pathways, recruitment, and flows of athletic talent. For example, Roderick (2006a) argues that networks of friends in a football club context prove useful for players as they develop ties with other ‘insiders’, some of whom may have extensive webs of contacts. In professional football, as in other industries, such contacts can be used to directly offer job opportunities at other clubs, informing a person

of potential job opportunities, or recommending a potential employee via a third party (Roderick, 2006a). Similarly, ‘matchmakers’ in professional boxing, who are responsible for arranging bouts between boxers and often work under the supervision of a particular promoter, comprise of a network of personal contacts where information about the boxing environment and particular boxers flow (Wacquant, 1998b). The complex network of relationships identified here in football and boxing allow for access to, and movement between, professional football clubs (Roderick, 2006b) and potential fights (Wacquant, 1998b). Similarly, work by Elliot and Maguire (2008, p.158) indicates that recruitment into, and career advancement, in professional sport can be facilitated through a series of “‘friends-of-friends’ networks and ‘bridgehead’ contacts”. More specifically, it is argued that friendship groups are used to share information about particular migratory destinations and/or potential employment opportunities which are passed through informal channels of communication (Elliot & Maguire, 2008). These friendship groups facilitate the flow of information between the potential employer and potential migrant employee. These mutually beneficial recruitments are explained as the result of human mediation facilitated by a series of informal interdependent networks of social relationships (Elliot & Maguire, 2008). At the same time, this research highlights the unplanned nature of such movements and suggests that players generally have little control over selecting their place and country of work and had to rely on the connections of agents, friends or club managers (Molnar & Maguire, 2008a). It is concluded that the significance of human interdependences is crucial when considering the mechanics of the various migratory movements that are occurring globally. Moreover, it is argued these

interdependencies should be examined in both spatial and temporal dimensions (Molnar & Maguire, 2008).

The body of research on friendship networks proves useful in indicating how links between athletes may affect the direction and flow of sport migration and highlights the unplanned nature of such developments. However, much of the work does not explain the actual nature of relationships between players in friendship networks. For the research which does, such as Roderick (2006a), interestingly friendships do develop, even despite the high levels of competition in professional football due to the competitive labour market and constant competition for first-team places coupled with the strong emphasis on individualism. Referred to as ‘trusted networks’, these consist of individuals that footballers have known over long periods of their career. Alternatively, Magee and Sugden (2002) argue that the short term nature of players’ relationships actually fosters a distorted sense of friendship amongst athletes. More specifically, it is argued that the career flexibility and mobility inherent in football, which is also a characteristic of many professional sports for that matter, undermines foundations of trust, and thus, potential friendship between players also (Magee & Sugden, 2002). The high rates of workplace mobility lead players to experience a distorted sense of what constitutes workplace friendships, given the motives of colleagues, thus relationships are referred to as a ‘citizenship’ rather than real friendships *per-se* (Magee & Sugden, 2002). Professional athletes may be vying for the same positions in a team or, as in the case with golf, competing against each other on a weekly basis, which can lead to issues regarding friendship (Magee & Sugden, 2002; Roderick, 2006b). Roderick (2006b, p.255) identifies

one interviewee from his study who said “think about yourself first and worry about the rest later”. Similarly, an experienced Premiership player also involved in the study explained how other players reacted to him throughout a period in which he was rehabilitating from a long-term injury:

At the end of the day players are very selfish people because they know ... just as long as they're fit ... I mean, they say 'hello' to you and 'how are you doing?' But I know because I'm a player myself, that they will give you so much concern but they're not going to lose any sleep over it. You know what I mean? They're not that bothered. Players think exactly what I expect them to think (Roderick, 2006b, p.256).

The result is that foundations of trust are often undermined and players find it difficult to develop respect for the workplace motives of their colleagues (Magee & Sugden, 2002). Similarly, and also in football, Magee (1998, p.129) examines what is termed “dressing room culture” where English football is characterised by a “dog-eat-dog” way of life and to this extent many players “look after themselves”. However, at the same time players are ultimately competing for the same team and thus are encouraged to ‘get on’ with other members of the team despite the fact they are often in direct competition with each other for places (Roderick, 2006a). The result, it is argued, is that professional footballers often engage in a process of ‘impression management’ whereby players put on a ‘false front’ with colleagues with whom there is conflict (Roderick, 2006a). In some cases, this is done between colleagues with intense rivalries and a high degree of animosity regarding their individual workplace interests. Furthermore, a player’s ability to negotiate periods of uncertainty, for example, can largely depend on their ability to manage their

impression in order to maintain a stable workplace identity (Roderick, 2006a; Roderick, 2014).

In a 60 year old study on professional boxing, Weinberg and Around (1952, p.465) explained that two boxers may be friends outside the ring but then try to inflict harm and “knock each other out” in the actual bout itself. This is explained by referring to the notion that the aggression between boxers during a fight becomes ‘impersonal’ and after the bout they may be as friendly as competition permits. Furthermore, any injuries inflicted on an opponent during a fight, which in extreme circumstances could include maiming or death, is “rationalised away by an effective trainer or manager in order to prevent an access of intense guilt, which can ruin a fighter” (Weinberg & Around, 1952, p.465). Furthermore, it is argued that the fact the boxer’s opponent is also attempting to hurt them and that ultimately the purpose of boxing is to beat the opponent into submission helps to rationalise the feelings of friendship which may occur outside the ring (Weinberg & Around, 1952). The research by Weinberg and Around (1952) provides the beginnings of a description of the culture between professional boxers but fails to develop this further, other than referring to conscious decisions made by the fighters and trainers themselves. However, from a figurational viewpoint, social phenomena can only be understood as the unintended outcome of a combination of conscious and subconscious actions between all parties. In other words, professional athletes are not in total control of their destiny but rather where they find themselves is the result of a combination of their own actions *and* the actions of others. The argument is later developed by Wacquant (2007) who refers to the ethic of sacrifice, which is promoted in

the sport of boxing and helps to enable boxers to remove themselves from the everyday world and create their own moral and sensual universe. In other words, it is argued that professional boxers attempt to ‘switch off’ from certain aspects of their everyday lives in order to help rationalise the notion that their careers are largely outside their control (Wacquant, 2007). This project on the lives of professional golfers will, therefore, maintain a focus on the unintended and unplanned aspects of their lives. Attention is now turned to notions of workplace insecurity in professional sport.

2.6 Sport migration and workplace insecurity

International movements of workers, including those in sport, are often portrayed as free will decisions made by the player themselves and linked with career freedom (Ohmae, 1995). However, a more critical assessment indicates that the majority of sportspeople have little control over the situation in which they find themselves and the ultimate decision on where they play. As Maguire and Falcoux (2011, p.5) argue, migration is marked by a “series of political, cultural, economic, and geographical issues and pressures of which, in the migrant figuration, owners, administrators, agents, officials and media personnel play a prominent part in structuring the migrant’s life”. The result is that job insecurity is an inherent feature of the work of professional sportspeople (Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007; McGillivray, Fearn, & McIntosh, 2005; Roderick, 2006b). Uncertainty is central to professional sport whilst career advancement and attainment is never secure. There is a common sense public perception that professional footballers, for example, are high status, financially secure individuals who regularly have approaches from clubs and agents looking for their services, with the possibility of fulfilling career

ambitions via national and international moves. However, Roderick (2012) argues that such assumptions are largely inaccurate because, even though some of these assumptions are relevant in some cases, for the most part the professional footballers interviewed in his study struggled to find new employment. Furthermore, many footballers came to feel unwanted and used by managers and, as a result, the necessities of making ends meet, rather than actually fulfilling their workplace obligations, were central to the experiences of these migrant workers (Roderick, 2012). The result is that professional footballers' work histories are in fact characteristically unstable and short-term in nature. Similarly, professional sportspeople often have little control of the situations in which they find themselves and had to rely on the connections of agents, friends or club managers. Molnar and Maguire (2008) observed that Hungarian footballers identified particular foreign countries as their ideal choice of destination – including England, Spain and Germany – and intended to select from those. However, the reality is that most football migrants had little control over this process and host countries were the result of decisions made by various people within their football networks (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). Although they began thinking about arranging their foreign careers with great hopes and expectations, the Hungarian professional footballers “soon have to realize that they are in no position to freely select club or country” (Molnar & Maguire, 2008, p.82). Many professional footballers, for example, appear to lack the necessary agency and sense of power to determine the direction of their personal careers at critical points in their lives (Roderick, 2012). And it seems clear that players are aware such circumstances are beyond their control and therefore their capacity to make career choices that meet their employment needs are severely constrained. Alternatively, other players can more

easily manage their moves if they are in stronger market positions, and their services, as a result, are more highly valued. For example, in-form and highly rated players can exercise greater control over their choices based on their individualised priorities and, therefore, can realise occupational aspirations through migration (Szymanski & Kuypers, 1999). It is clear that a sports migrant's ability to control and shape the direction of their employment travel cannot be separated from the relational constraints that impact upon them (Roderick, 2012).

The characteristics of the work of sport migrants are similar in kind to other highly skilled workers in entertainment industries, who are generally employed on short, fixed-term contracts and who must be mobile for work (Elliott & Maguire, 2008; Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007). Roderick (2013) specifically refers to the short term nature of work in professional football that includes the frequent circulation of club staff – such as players, managers, and coaches, amongst others – which may lead players to be unsettled at repeated points during their football careers. These constantly shifting places of work, the associated short term nature of contracts, and overall lack of control means that some migrant experiences are marked by various degrees of job place insecurity (Roderick, 2013). Similarly, there is a sense of workplace vulnerability which marks the experiences of sport migrants (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). In his study of professional footballers, Roderick (2013, p.391) rather explicitly explains how in advance of the interviews:

We did not anticipate how preoccupied players would be in terms of the way they came to comprehend their status within the football clubs. We were taken aback

by the consistency with which their narratives were so vividly marked by apprehension about their future careers.

Roderick (2013) identifies that increased job mobility led to feelings of rejection and work vulnerability for professional footballers as they recognised that their playing services were, at least temporarily, unwelcome. Similarly, through undertaking a documentary analysis of football reports, Platts and Smith (2010) suggest that the difficulties involved with the process of transferring can be dependent on other people's perceptions of player values, professional standing and career status. In some extreme cases professional sportspeople's experiences of migration have become so troublesome that players have tired of acquiescing to their work situation and decided to end their careers (Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007; Roderick, 2013).

Sports migrant experiences of their career moves is often affected by the choices of others rather than their own decisions. According to Roderick (2013), experiences of player insecurity and vulnerability were, in the majority of cases, reasons why players move and a direct consequence of their workplace failures rather than successes. The reality is such that football is a form of entertainment where the phrase “‘you are only as good as your last game’ is of central importance” (Roderick, 2006b, p.246). Perhaps more strikingly, Roderick (2006a) explains that clubs are small workplaces where players develop individualistic, short term perspectives that can undermine trust in their employers. As such, the labour mobility of professional football means many players move because they are surplus to requirements; for example, if they are unwanted by managers or used as a means of raising money for employers (Roderick, 2013). Players

tend to find themselves rejected for a number of diverse reasons and the subsequent search for work can become stressful because choices are often limited, constrained or non-existent (Roderick, 2013). It appears that for many players job relocation was the only way in which a footballer's professional status could be extended. They recognise their futures are undetermined and they must seek out new opportunities by moving (Roderick, 2013). Money and living necessities appear as key factors which contour players' experiences of migration (Roderick, 2013). Darby and Solberg (2010) also highlight this when suggesting Ghanaian football players are prepared to travel widely – to countries such as India, Thailand or Vietnam, for example – in search of contracts thus indicating the strength of the 'push' factors that encourage players to leave Ghana. Their motivation is to escape a football and social context that provides few opportunities for financial reward (Darby & Solberg, 2010). Similarly, Carter (2007) argues that the motivations for athletes undertaking sometimes dangerous international journeys are for greater economic opportunity and a concern for the economic stability of an individual migrant's family.

Workplace insecurity is often significantly higher in sport compared to other 'mainstream' jobs given the potential for injury at any time. Indeed there are very few professions where status is dependent on the fitness of the body and the threat of injury is also accepted as an inevitable feature of a sportsperson's life (Charmaz, 2003; Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007; Roderick, Waddington, & Parker, 2000; Waddington & Smith, 2008). Roderick (2006b, p.260) argues that uncertainty is a:

Pervasive feature of a professional footballer's life because a career in this entertainment industry is underpinned by the constant threat that work can end abruptly: not only is there a strong perception that 'you are only as good as your last game', but players are aware also that their next game may in fact be their last.

Closely linked to injury is the perceived notion that time is running out for older players. These older players are at increased risk of being replaced and thus "live in a climate of fear: fear that someone younger, cheaper, fitter and who is perceived to be hungrier for success, may replace them" (Roderick, 2006b, p.253). A player's physical condition deteriorates with age, which, sooner or later, becomes evident to them and is a governing factor in their careers (Roderick, 2013). The majority of older players, therefore, are not able to treat football as a vocation given the constant threat that they may be required to retire soon (Roderick, 2013). Furthermore, the competitive labour market in professional football means it is important that players remain visible to potential employers. However, remaining visible presents a problem, as there is an over-supply of aspiring professionals attempting to achieve success in football (Roderick, 2006b), as well as other sports. Roderick (2006b, p.253) goes as far as to say there is a "constant labour surplus", a situation which "nearly always places employers in a position of considerable strength". This sentiment is expressed by a professional footballer interviewed in Roderick's (2006b, p.235) study:

The game is so cut throat and there is always someone coming along who is that bit better than you at doing your job. Financial implications dictate that if a player is younger and showing a certain amount of potential then, I mean, every

chairman will think, ‘if we can pay him half of what we’re paying our current player, and then we could sell our current player ... then we should do it’.

Experiences of insecurity were further compounded given players experiences of moving up and down professional leagues (Roderick, 2013). This is also relevant to professional golfers who often move up and down the hierarchy of golf tours. Interestingly, football players spoke in straightforward terms about opportunities for, and experiences of, upward job mobility (Roderick, 2013). For those approached by clubs in higher leagues, for example, all spoke of having few issues or tensions with their current managers, fellow team mates or club administrators and, significantly, they were mostly ever-present in the first team of their lower league club (Roderick, 2013). Moves that involved going up the league structure were described by interviewees in simple terms regarding higher levels of pay and the ability to ‘prove’ themselves, however, alternatively, the experiences of players moving down the league structure were generally described with uncertainty and apprehension (Roderick, 2013).

Professional football is well established in the United Kingdom (UK), however, for Maguire (2011a), it is sports which are not established that exhibit the highest levels of workplace insecurity. For example, the general instability of the English basketball game is cited as a major factor in the increased levels of insecurity amongst American sport migrants involved in the game (Maguire, 2011a). Similarly, the EPGA tour stages events in China, India, Morocco, Malaysia, United Arab Emirates, and Russia, where the sport of golf has not been long established thus may potentially lead to even greater levels of player insecurity, even despite the fact the players are only at the venue for a

short amount of time. Furthermore, it appears that professional sports with high levels of media attention tend to have a highly competitive labour market with many athletes trying to break into the top levels and thus increased job insecurity for all (Poli, 2010). Poli (2010) notes, however, that the uncertainty linked to the pursuit of a career in football does not deter the numerous aspiring professionals who migrate to achieve this goal. Despite the relatively small number of people who attain high levels of success in professional sport, it often enjoys huge media coverage, particularly in ‘mainstream’ sports such as golf, and over the years has acquired a “very strong symbolic value” (Poli, 2010, p.1008). In other words, mainstream sports tend to have a particular significance in society whereby they are seen to be the panacea to numerous issues, such as providing opportunities for career advancement and financial security, and viewed without any problems. However the reality, it seems, is that a career in professional sport is marked by high levels of insecurity. For Poli (2010, p.1008), the hosting of the World Cup 2010 by South Africa, for example, was part of a larger process of the “mythification” of football as a means of social ascension for youths worldwide. Thus, the media contribute to the ‘illusion’ that professional football provides a distinct career advancement opportunity for many. The media also play a part in glorifying the success of expatriates by elevating them to an iconic level (Poli, 2010). Therefore the media, which generally showcases the few examples of upward career paths, and in doing so tends to mask the many cases of failure, often convinces young people and their families that it is worth putting all their efforts into the aim of pursuing a career in professional sport, frequently to the detriment of school education or an apprenticeship beyond sport (Poli, 2010). The reality, however, is such that professional sport is characterised by an extremely

competitive labour market and job insecurity. Furthermore, it has been argued that the impact of the large numbers of players striving for a career in professional sport has been “particularly devastating” for people in impoverished countries (Poli, 2010, p.1008). This phenomenon is particularly prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa in countries that export the greatest number of players, such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana and Senegal (Poli, 2010). Many youths from these countries consider migrating in pursuit of a career in professional football, however, the reality of experiences is that the huge hopes placed in football are not realistic when compared to the real chances of promotion offered by the game (Poli, 2010). It appears that the majority of migrant sportspeople experiences are rarely associated with much success or career progression. As Poli (2010, p.1009) rather explicitly states, “for any young person, irrespective of their origin ... it is foolhardy to consider football as the only means of professional integration and social success”.

To summarise this section, the lives of professional sportspeople may be characterised by significant wealth for a minority of those involved, however, careers are often relatively short and there is considerable uncertainty in the ‘marketplace’ (Frick, 2007; Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007; Lanfranchi, & Taylor, 2001; Roderick, 2006b). The reality is such that sports workers in general face careers that are relatively short-term with a regular possibility of career failure and rejection. Despite this, there are high levels of migration from individuals searching for personal economic advancement and wealth that top professional sports people experience. It is important, therefore, to provide a more detailed analysis of the pay and conditions available in professional sport.

2.7 Pay and conditions in professional sport

So far, this chapter has highlighted a number of challenges that sport migrants face while conducting their work. According to Ley (2004, p.151), highly skilled workers are often thought to benefit from increasing levels of migration, however, they are themselves vulnerable to some of the insecurities and transience that are typically associated with unskilled work, albeit, for some with “much higher incomes that offset some of these challenges”. The purpose of this section, therefore, is to briefly analyse the literature on pay and conditions in professional sport. In the past, being a ‘professional’ sportsperson and playing for money was associated with manual labour and the working classes (Dunning & Sheard, 2005), however, a change in reward structure over the past 50 years, in particular, has impacted upon career earnings to such a degree that for many they now are commensurate with the standards of income traditionally associated with the middle- and upper-classes of society (Cashmore & Parker, 2003; Gratton & Taylor, 2000; Szymanski & Kuypers, 1999; Wacquant, 2011). The de-amateurisation and commercialisation of some popular sports, such as association football and golf, which has increased as a result of the development of sports sponsorship and the rapidly increasing global television audience for live and recorded sport, has resulted in huge increases in the financial rewards available to some successful sportspeople (Murphy & Waddington, 2007). Over the past 20 years basketball player Michael Jordan and golfer Tiger Woods, for example, have dominated the Forbes magazine list of the world’s best paid athletes. In 1995, Jordan’s salary from the Chicago Bulls was \$3.9 million, but this was dwarfed by his earnings from product endorsement, estimated to have been

somewhere in the region of \$40 million (Armstrong, 1996). Similarly, when Tiger Woods turned professional in 1996 he won two USPGA tournaments within seven weeks and after only four months of competition he ranked 24th on the overall annual money list with \$800,000 in earnings. By the end of Woods's first year on tour his on-course earnings and off-course sponsorship were estimated at over \$26 million (Farrell, Karels, Montfort, & McClatchey, 2000). Furthermore, leading footballers in the English Premier League can receive salaries in excess of £100,000 per week, in addition to substantial earnings from advertising and product endorsement (Lonsdale, 2004; Murphy & Waddington, 2007; Naouali, Ati, & Sobry, 2011). For example, at the end of the 2010-11 season the following Premiership players were listed in the world's top 20 largest annual football salaries: Manchester United's Wayne Rooney (£11.9M); Manchester City's Carlos Tevez (£11.3) and Yaya Touré (£10.1M); Chelsea's Frank Lampard (£7.8M), Fernando Torres (£7.6M), and Didier Drogba (£7.2M); and Liverpool's Steven Gerrard (£6.8M) (Naouali et al., 2011).

Given the significant rewards available and the celebrity lifestyles associated with high-profile success, it is unsurprising that a career in elite level sport is considered an attractive proposition by many. However, despite the millionaire stereotype, the reality is that enormous rewards in professional sport are available to a significant minority of competitors and the vast majority fare comparatively poorly (Frank & Cook, 2010; Giulianotti, 1999; Murphy & Waddington, 2007; Szymanski & Kuypers, 1999). For example, Murphy and Waddington (2007, p.240) have pointed out that of the 2,600 members of the English Professional Footballers Association, only 800 are contracted to

clubs in the Premier League and the majority are signed to lower division clubs where many will receive “incomes little better than, or even worse than, those of many of the spectators who watch them play”. However, research examining pay and conditions of elite, professional sportspeople and their attitudes to their ‘work’ is extremely limited (Roderick, 2013). A key aspect of this study, therefore, is to examine issues of money in the lives of a particular group of professional sportspeople, golfers.

Despite the common sense perceptions of the lifestyles and monetary rewards associated with being a professional sportsperson, which are often the central focus of the media, there is general agreement academically that making a living from professional sport is unrealistic for most people. In 1988, Leonard-Ii and Reyman conducted a statistical analysis of sports professionals who achieved upward social mobility and made a living. Their results indicated that the professional sports opportunity structure is “severely restricted and the odds of attaining a professional sport career are slim” (Leonard-Ii & Reyman, 1988, p.165). More recently, Wacquant (2011) suggests that given the million-dollar prize-money which features heavily in media stories on high-profile, but generally atypical, heavyweight title fights, most people are likely to believe that all boxers collect large purses when in fact the vast majority are barely earning a few hundred dollars for weeks of laborious, intensive preparation. Professional boxers have traditionally entered the sport in order to achieve material success and economic improvement (Weinberg & Arond, 1952). As Wacquant (1995, p.326) argues, the “statistically improbable hope of astronomical ‘paydays’ that will allow you to buy a house, retire, and provide for kin and kids are prominently featured in the vocabularies of

motives”. The reality, it seems, is that professional boxing provides not so much an opportunity for economic betterment *per-se* but rather the promise of what could loosely be defined as ‘a better life’, for boxers and their families (Hare, 1971). Similarly, in his work on professional football, which is often glamorised as a high earning profession, Roderick (2006b) argues that the inherent uncertainty, short term nature, and overall insecurity of the sport as work means concerns over money feature heavily in players’ workplace experiences. Roderick (2006b, p.253) provides a typical quote from a professional regarding the short term nature of contracts, who said “oh God, it frightens me to death, you know, my contract running out at the end of the season. It’s coming too quick ... I’ve got to be able to pay the mortgage”. When probed about whether the player in question spoke to anybody outside the club about this he replied “I speak to my girlfriend. In fact, recently, I said to her, ‘you know we could be living in a shed at the end of the garden at the end of this year!’” (Roderick, 2006b, p.253).

It is important to stress that the increasing globalisation of sport, and the freedom of sports trade which has accompanied this, has not affected pay and conditions equally across all sports (Anghie, 2000). Rather, Stark (2006) argues that globalisation can affect income in complex ways over very brief periods of time and there are many such outcomes. More specifically, globalisation may increase the income of all wage earners, enable those who were not wage earners to earn income, increase the income of one person while put another out of work, and simultaneously increase income and devalue currency so people have more money but less purchasing capacity (Stark, 2006). For example, the international travel required when competing on professional golf tours may

enable a player to earn large sums of money, or they may break even given their expenses, or it may in fact cost them significant sums of money given the travel costs involved. There are many such outcomes. This said, it does appear that a characteristic of increased levels of globalisation is greater “polarization between the haves and the have-nots” (Stark, 2006, p.1561). For example, Ackroyd (2012) argues that a product of globalisation is the emergence of a small but highly powerful group, the super-rich, an international group which affects economics worldwide, and, this may include top-level sportspeople who have been able to secure themselves financially (Roderick, 2006b; Szymanski & Kuypers, 1999). At the same time, increasing globalisation has also impacted on patterns of inequality. According to Ackroyd (2012), the high level of recompense available only in the very top echelons of professional sport leads aspiring players to invest large sums of money, travel to places they have not been before, and engage in intense competition in pursuit of reaching the top of their game. More specifically, Poli (2010, p.1008) argues that, in professional football, there is a “pyramid structure” where the number of clubs having considerable means at their disposal is relatively small compared to the large number of less well-off teams. As such, the reality is that an average professional footballer’s income is more likely to stagnate rather than ascend into a successful highly paid career. The implication of this is that continually ascending career paths are more of an exception than a rule (Poli, 2010). Furthermore, it has been argued that the pursuit of excellence can become financially costly for the aspiring sportsperson given the growing numbers entering sport (De Bosscher, Du Bois, & Heyndels, 2012). This is not to suggest that the lives of professionals who go on to achieve high levels of financial reward are problem free. In professional football, for

example, Poli (2010) argues that high levels of recompense also tend to reduce players' room for manoeuvre by imposing strict conditions on transfer and travel which can often be unfavourable. Only the most successful players manage to extricate themselves from such a position. This said, below the top level it is clear players are subject to even more financial uncertainty which contributes to a workplace climate with increasing levels of psychological fear of failure and anxiety (Roderick, 2013).

It is clear that issues of money are central to the lives of the majority of sportspeople. Where opinion differs, however, is in explaining earning potential. For example, some studies argue that sportspeople have their destiny in their own hands and that earning potential is a product of individual sporting performance. In professional football, Frick (2007, p.442) draws on a number of quantifiable "performance measures" as the major determinants of player salaries, including: age and number of career games, number of goal assists and tackles won, the number of international caps and European level games, and the number of goals scored in previous seasons. This argument is extended to account for some more subjective measures including the ability of individuals to be multi-positional and to be able to control the ball with both feet, which both add a premium to their salary (Frick, 2007). However, such viewpoints are limited given the narrow quantitative approach where data are plotted over a snapshot during just one season, on a small number of individual performance measures, and which fails to account for the wider networks that sportspeople are inescapably involved. However, some academic papers of a quantitative nature attempt to draw on wider factors which do not occur in the sports arena itself. By referring to the "superstar effect", Lucifora and

Simons (2003, p.51) attempt to use the number of Google hits as a measure of a player's popularity and equate this to their wage income. It is unsurprising that quantitative statistical analysis of this kind in professional sport are more commonplace, given the access issues associated with professional sportspeople, however, a solely quantitative approach fails to account for individual experiences and explanations, which is a central premise for this study on professional golfers.

Rather than offer a 'snap shot' in time, often provided by quantitative approaches, a longer-term developmental approach should be adopted, where possible, when assessing the career, and income, trajectories of professional sportspeople. McGovern (2002) has outlined a hierarchy based 'job ladder' of professional sport consisting of entry at the bottom and upward movement linked to the progressive development of skills, experience, and knowledge. Entry and retention at or near the top rung of the sport job ladder is unusual, but can happen on occasions. The evidence suggests that, despite some superficial similarities with traditional white collar jobs, the sport job ladder does not reflect the 'normal' career progression experienced by the majority (Roderick, 2006a). Sport careers develop in a rather more unplanned or disorderly manner and thus the chances of making money are both difficult and extremely unevenly distributed from the start (Roderick, 2006a; Wacquant, 2007). Similarly, Rosen and Sanderson (2001) analyse the developmental trajectories of professional sportspeople and conclude that sport, in common with other forms of entertainment professions such as musicians, is a high risk career and most attempts to break into the top echelons result in failure. Large

financial risks are inevitable given the small number of top players, which is further compounded given that career lengths in sport are often short in duration.

Despite the critical appraisal of career prospects in professional sport, Rosen and Sanderson (2001) adopt an ideological position regarding the decisions which accompany this. They argue that the uncertainty and high risk of failure in professional sports does not mean entrants are “giddy risk lovers with unrealistic assessments of themselves” but rather make “informed decisions about their prospects in sport” (Rosen & Sanderson, 2001, p.60). For Rosen and Sanderson (2001, p.60) the continual feedback on past performances which sportspeople receive is offered as an opportunity to reassess their chances and “when the record gets sufficiently unfavourable, they quit and do something else”. Whilst Rosen and Sanderson (2001) recognise that aspiring sportspeople invest much time and money into pursuing a sport career, they pay insufficient attention to the impact this may have in clouding the decisions made regarding career chances. Roderick (2006a) notes that entrants to professional football soon become acutely aware of the uncertainty in the market – such as limited duration of contracts, competition for places, excessive supply of labour, and vulnerability to aging – and the impacts of this on their income. However, Roderick (2006a) also states that decisions are rarely made in isolation. Aspiring sportspeople are often overly involved and may therefore fail to view the reality of their situation in a sufficiently detached manner given the emotions and competing information from others in their wider network – including family, friends, and the lure of media accounts of top level sport – which contours decisions of this kind (Roderick, 2006a). It is, of course, perfectly understandable that aspiring sportspeople

will be so involved, and it is a key aspect of this thesis to offer the more detached, social scientists' view of the figurations in which professional golfers find themselves working in and around.

Roderick (2006a) argues that the career paths of professional footballers, and thus the monetary rewards they receive, do not solely rest on the sporting performance or choices of individual players but rather upon a number of unintended outcomes throughout a player's entire career. A young footballer at the outset of their career may think that their destiny is in their own hands, however, as they develop as a player they find themselves increasingly caught up in ties of interdependence which they cannot comprehend very easily, if at all (Roderick 2006a). Possessing potential, for example, will not guarantee employment and players must register good performances and achieve the desired outcomes. But even then players come to recognise that they are bound up in the social relations of the production and consumption of performances in matches, and that assessment of talent is, ultimately, socially determined (Roderick, 2006b). Roderick (2006b) is referring to a process whereby sportspeople often refer to their current career and financial situation as 'bad luck' and only later come to realise, if they ever realise at all, that it is the result of the intended and unintended outcomes that arise out of the relationships they have with all people in their workplace network. In a similar vein, Wacquant (1998b, 2001) argues that however much boxers believe the ring and gym is their place of work where they make their living, they cannot ignore that the complex system of patronage and sponsorship that surrounds the ring contributes to what happens in it. As Wacquant (1995, p.521) puts it, "fighters are often treated with the care and

consideration befitting ‘a bar of soap’ and where chances of making money are both minuscule and extremely unevenly distributed from the start”. Also in boxing, Weinberg and Arond (1952) argued over 50 years ago that trainers, managers and promoters viewed boxing in different ways from the boxers and used the sport to make money for themselves rather than look after the interests of the fighter. It seems reasonably clear then that professional boxers and footballers, and perhaps all professional sportspeople generally, are embroiled in a complex network of interdependencies which contour the experience of economic issues in the sport workplace over the long-term.

There is no academic literature addressing, specifically, pay and conditions in the workplace of professional golf, however, golf does attract media attention more generally. These media accounts, although rather anecdotal, do offer glimpses into the lives of professional golfers. For example, Biddiscombe (2008, 2009) and Feinstein (2008) offer interesting accounts of the experiences of golfers entering qualifying school for the EPGA and USPGA tours respectively. Such accounts, interesting though they are in addressing the fine margins between qualifying for the golf tours, and thus ultimately enabling golfers to play for prize money, are somewhat descriptive and chart players’ experiences as ‘individual case studies’. Rather than view players in isolation, this study aims to maintain a focus on the complex relational network in which they are inescapably enmeshed, and the extent to which they are enabled and constrained by the power struggles which characterise such relationships. As Elias (2001a, p.24) points out “it is easy to lose sight of the fundamental importance of the relations between people for the individual in their midst”. Of course, much of the network is not even ‘known’, in the

strictest sense, to the golfers themselves, or even the researchers as more detached observers of the participants. Nonetheless, it is important to conceive of the individual golfers in this study as necessarily being impacted on by, and impacting on others within, a wider network of relations.

This literature review has highlighted some of the difficulties associated with the lives of professional athletes. The lived reality, it seems, for many less well-known sportspeople, but also some celebrities, is one that comes with “painful costs, difficult lessons and problematic rewards” (Carter, 2007, p.374). Even despite such difficulties, many professionals continue to pursue their careers in sport and, furthermore, are continually joined by rising numbers of aspiring athletes. For many professionals, the sport they play is all they have ever focussed on doing and their only career experience (McGillivray et al., 2005). From a young age many have grown up with the dream of one day being a professional which comes to dominate a large part of their lives (McGillivray et al., 2005). Specifically in regards to professional football, McGillivray et al. (2005, p.102) argue that players become “caught up in and by the beautiful game”, so much so that being a football player is not just their career but seen as a key part of their identity as a person. Furthermore, due to the large amount of time devoted to their chosen sport, in the form of training, for example, professional sportspeople often possess few of the transferable skills required for employment outside of sport. In other words, the time spent devoted to training instead of studying may serve to deskill them if their circumstances change and they are required to seek employment beyond sport. The market realities for players with few transferable employment skills may weigh heavily

on the minds of some players who may be required to get work post-sport (McGillivray et al., 2005). More recently, Roderick (2014, p.16) has used the term “dis-identification” to explain a process whereby athletes engage in sometimes cynical and instrumental attitudes to their jobs in order to resist coach/managerial domination which appears to be a key part of professional football. In other words, professional sportspeople are said to undergo a process whereby they attempt to distance themselves from their attachment to their employers in order to cope with sometimes difficult aspects of their lives, such as coach and managerial power (Roderick, 2014). The result is, in part, professional athletes often express discontent yet maintain an apparent dedication and commitment to their careers.

2.8 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to evaluate the literature relating to the lives of migrants in professional sport. Overall, it is argued that migration is more adequately viewed as having both enabling and constraining effects on sportspeople’s lives. It has become clear that global sport is a highly contested, structured process that is contoured by power dynamics which provides both opportunities for social advancement and, at the same time, the reinforcement of exploitation and inequality. It has been argued that growing sports labour migration affects athletes’ lives in a variety of ways. More specifically, after making some opening comments on the ideological and common sense views often associated with migration, this chapter has drawn attention to issues of: culture shock; family impacts; friendship networks; workplace insecurity; and pay and conditions. In doing so, this review has critically analysed the literature that examines the

careers of professional sportspeople, and other migrant professions more generally, and revealed that their lives are often significantly different to the glamorised celebrity portrayal painted by the media (Gearing, 1999). Furthermore, professional athletes themselves can give the appearance of living a celebrity lifestyle but on further analysis it is evident that many remain marginalised both in terms of the wider society and at times within the very organisations in which they work (Carter, 2007; Wacquant, 2011). The personal consequences of transnational employment requires not only workers to possess the skills, qualifications, and expertise that can cross borders but also “people who exhibit the personal qualities and characteristics to take such movements in their stride” (Williams et al., 2013, p.185). These migrants must also have an ‘openness towards difference’ which is taken as an indefinable quality that enables them to pursue a transnational career (Devadason & Fenton, 2013).

It has also been argued that constant exposure to different cultures requires sport migrants to develop new types of ‘flexible personal controls’, dispositions, and means of orientation, in effect a new habitus (Maguire, 2011a, p.1048). In other words, professional sportspeople are required to adjust and adapt quickly when moving internationally. Sport migrants experience varying degrees of segregation and integration and thus are required to adapt their behaviours to cope with such international movements (Agergaard, 2008). Athletes are constrained to develop new types of interpersonal skills in order to more adequately cope with the variety of cultures to which they are being exposed. The result is that migrants’ lives are shaped by local attachments, identities, and experiences of sport. A major omission in some of the academic research

in the area is the failure to interview professional sportspeople themselves, possibly because of the access issues, and much of the literature can, therefore, only be quite speculative. Specifically, there are no studies which focus on the lives of professional athletes with constant circulatory migratory patterns. In order to advance understanding of the lives of professional sportspeople, therefore, it is important to conduct an empirically rigorous analysis of this area. To this end, an in depth account of the lives of professional golfers will serve as a case study in which to make more adequate sense of the lives of highly skilled migrants more generally. Furthermore, it is argued that a figural interpretation holds the potential for offering a greater understanding of the lives of professional sportspeople. The following chapter, therefore, will detail the key concepts of figural sociology.

Chapter 3

Key Concepts of Figurational Sociology

When conducting a research project it is important to ensure that the empirical data are sufficiently informed by an appropriate theoretical orientation. How adequately a study can shed light on the issue at hand, therefore, depends on the blend between empirical rigour and the theoretical approach adopted (Bloyce & Murphy, 2008). According to Bloyce and Murphy (2008, p.120):

When one's theory is insufficiently constrained by the available evidence, it runs the risk of becoming idle, albeit perhaps, interesting speculation. When empirical research is insufficiently informed by theory, it runs the counter-danger of becoming an exercise in fact gathering, albeit perhaps interesting fact gathering.

The research process, therefore, should involve a blend between theoretical orientation and empirical rigour. The purpose of this chapter is to set out and justify several sensitising concepts that underpin the theoretical orientation which informed this research, namely figurational sociology. More specifically, this includes an analysis of figurations and interdependence, unplanned processes, differential power relations, and habitus, and aims to show how such concepts may help contribute towards a more object adequate perspective of the lives of professional golfers. For the purpose of this analysis the concepts are presented in separate discrete sections, however, it must be stressed this is purely for organisational purposes and they are in fact considered to be interrelated with significant overlap between them.

From a figural viewpoint, Elias (1987, p.20) argued that the process of undertaking research should involve a “two-way traffic” between testing existing explanations and generating new ideas directly from the data collected. This project, therefore, attempts to apply, test, and potentially build upon the figural concepts outlined in this chapter by drawing on the empirical data from professional golfers. Promoting this two-way traffic between theory and data can help move beyond descriptive accounts of the issue and help better explain the experiences of sport migrants and globalisation processes more generally (Bryman, 2012). This is particularly important given that the previous chapter highlighted certain aspects of migration research, such as patterns and flows, is heavily theorised, however, the experiences of the sports migrants themselves much less so. The ideas of figural sociology in particular have been successfully applied to globalisation work by, amongst others, Maguire (1993, 1994, 1996, 1999, 2005, 2008, 2011a, 2011b) and Bloyce (2007, 2008), and has been combined with symbolic interactionism in Roderick’s (2003) account of the lives of professional footballers. However, figural sociology has not been used to shed light on the working lives of professional golfers. This chapter begins with a discussion examining the distinction often drawn between the ‘individual’ and ‘society’, which has also been referred to as the ‘agency and structure’ debate (Hassard & Cox, 2013).

3.1 Figurations and interdependence

Figural sociology, or process sociology as it is sometimes referred to, has developed primarily out of the writings of Norbert Elias (1887-1990) (see Elias 1978, 1987, 1994, 2001a, 2001b). Human interdependencies are a central feature of the

figurational debate. Elias (1978) argued that it is not fruitful to view ‘the individual’ and ‘society’ as two independently existing objects, but rather the two concepts refer to “inseparable levels of the same human world” (Murphy, Sheard, & Waddington, 2000, p.92). In other words, it is argued that it is senseless to generate conceptual distinctions like ‘individual and society’ as though they were separate things like a bat and ball (Elias, 1978). Elias (1978) referred to these as ‘false dichotomies’, and attempted to resist the pressure to split and polarise conceptions of humankind and rather viewed individuals as ‘interdependent’ with each other, arguing that people’s lives develop as part of the ‘figurations’ they form. This concept was developed to convey the idea that figurational sociology is concerned not with *homo clausus*, that is, where individuals are viewed as self-contained and separate from other people, but with *homines aperti*, that is, where people are bonded together in ‘dynamic constellations’ or ‘figurations’ (Elias, 1978; Murphy et al., 2000). Such bonds are conceptualised as forming figurations, or networks, of interdependent people (Elias, 1994).

Elias (1994, p.214) defines a figuration as “reciprocally oriented and dependent people”. Nobody lives completely separately from other human beings, no one is independent as people are dependent on one another at a variety of different levels. For example, Goudsblom (1977, p.7) states that from birth “all of [a] child’s learning, its learning to speak, to think, to act, takes place in a setting of social interdependencies”. People are more or less dependent on each other, first by nature – such as a baby’s dependence upon their parents – and then through social learning, education, socialisation, and socially generated reciprocal needs. People are connected to one

another via different types of interdependencies including those based on economic resources, emotion, information or status (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). These mutual dependencies mean that people are inextricably linked and exist only as pluralities and only in figurations (Elias, 1978). The concept of interdependence aims to move beyond viewing individuals' existence as separate to one another but rather people are inextricably bound (Elias, 1978). The concept of figurations also suggests that interdependencies impose constraints on behaviour (van Krieken, 1998). In other words, the actions of one person always affects others given that people are integrally linked. For example, the lives of professional golfers interviewed in this study are affected by their family, fellow competitors, EPGA tour officials, tournament organisers, and others in the wider figuration. This point on figurations is closely linked with the concepts of 'unplanned processes' and 'power balances', which are explained in more detail later in this chapter. From a figural standpoint, people can only be understood through their relationships with other people (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). As Elias (2001a) states, in order to understand either the collective social group or the individual it is important to firstly analyse the relationship between the two. The task of social scientists, accordingly, is to "explore and to make people understand, the patterns they form together, the nature and the changing configuration of all that binds them to each other" (Elias, 1987, p.79). It is argued that social phenomena can be best explored, therefore, through examination of the interdependencies between people (Dopson, 2001; van Krieken, 1998).

When figural sociology is applied to the problem of global migration, which is the issue at hand here, research should focus on the ways in which people are bonded

to one another globally and the manner in which multiple global networks of interdependence, sometimes referred to as global figurations, enable and constrain the actions, and movements, of people (Maguire, 1988b). Maguire (1988b) is referring to the notion that the figural approach attempts to avoid reification of social structures. Rather the basis of any system or issue, whether that be the process of globalisation or the experience of migration, is nothing more than the actions of groups of people bonded together in dynamic constellations (Gabriel & Mennell, 2011). This particular project then will attempt to avoid viewing professional golfers' lives in isolation and rather maintain a focus on the relational network, in which they are inescapably enmeshed, and the numerous webs of interdependence which characterise this (Elias, 1978). From a figural viewpoint, the 'individual' lives of professional golfers can only be understood in relation to the figurations of interdependent people of which they are a part. Through exploring the ways in which golfers' lives are shaped by their connections with other people – such as other players, their families, tournament officials, caddies, and equipment sponsors – this research will attempt to elicit the enabling and constraining relationships that exist between people in a golfer's network, and thus more adequately highlight the realities of their lives.

3.2 Developmental, multi-causal, and object adequate perspectives

Figural sociologists stress that contemporary social phenomena can only be understood when viewed within both the broader social and historical context (Elias, 1978). More specifically, Elias (1978) argued in favour of a developmental viewpoint which references the earlier stages of human action, and criticised the tendency for

sociologists to describe the relationships between people in static terms, something he referred to as ‘process-reduction’. The constant interweaving of human actions means the figurations in which people are enmeshed are constantly in flux and the interdependence shifts over the course of a lifetime (Elias, 2001a). Indeed as social phenomena results from the interweaving of individual actions it is impossible to locate their origins to any particular point or moment in time (Elias, 2001a). From a figurational perspective, people are viewed as simultaneously forming a number of different networks of interdependence, which influences their experiences over different times and in different contexts. These networks of interdependent relationships, for which professional golfers are themselves a part, are fluid and so must be understood as ‘in process’, ‘processual’, or ‘developmental’ (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Rather than offer a ‘snap shot’ in time, which is often the case with certain theoretical approaches, a developmental viewpoint should be adopted in order to promote a more realistic analysis of the issue at hand. The reality is such that much of the research on issues surrounding globalisation is more present centred than from a developmental perspective (Bloyce, 2008).

In order to shed more light on issues of globalisation research should maintain focus on processes where people’s experiences are characterised by lengthening chains of interdependency (Maguire, 2011a). In this particular project the lived experiences of professional golfers will be conceptualised as the result of changes throughout different stages of their particular careers. Golfers’ lives are shaped by experiences over time and place in numerous different contexts and thus will be viewed in reference to the often complex route taken to their current position. Indeed professional sportspeople’s careers

often develop in a rather more unplanned and disorderly manner than generally perceived, and thus the nature of their lives can be difficult and extremely unevenly distributed from the start (Roderick, 2006b). Examining the lives of professional golfers developmentally, therefore, has a greater potential to better explain the nature of unplanned elements in their lives. For Dopson and Waddington (1996, p.535), a longer-term developmental perspective is important to help ensure a “fuller understanding of the way in which the actions of interdependent people interweave to produce trends which no one has planned or intended, and which then constitute and constrain the perceptions, goals and actions of people”. Put more simply, the lives of professional golfers today are the results of yesterday’s unplanned events. It is important, therefore, to maintain a focus on the processual nature of professional golfers’ careers. At the same time, however, it should also be stressed that there are limitations to the extent to which this study can adopt a developmental approach given, for example, the access issues related to interviewing professionals longitudinally over multiple years, or securing access to retired golfers. In other words, the researcher is aware of the importance to examine the process, however, also restricted in being able to do this as fully as might be desired. That said, a conscious effort was made to analyse the processual elements of golfers’ careers on tour, if not the long-term historical aspects of their lives which would have been preferable.

The figural approach eschews absolutist, mono-causal, unidirectional explanations for social phenomena but rather attempts to highlight the complex nature of relationships in which people in figurations inevitably exist. Bloyce and Murphy (2008)

suggest that theoretical standpoints on globalisation have, contrastingly, often adopted a ‘broad-brush’ approach and reduced both globalisation and its effects to a structured set of static processes. For example, research has explained the global movement of migrants as one of free choice, strong market positions, and without any problems (Ohmae, 1995; Mountford, 1997; Sklair, 2000). However, the process of globalisation and its effects is more adequately conceptualised as a complex long-term development which involves broad multifaceted elements. In other words, migrants’ experiences of globalisation are complex and unique to each person (Maguire, 2011b). Professional golfers, for example, are likely to experience the progressive and liberating effects of globalisation, which may enable them to access greater recompense and improved resources while, at the same time, also experiencing the divisive and constraining aspects of migration which may impact on their lives. Players’ lived experiences will also vary depending upon a number of other factors including, for example, skill level of player, stage in career, and family commitments. These examples indicate that simplistic one-way explanations for social phenomena, although likely to be part of the overall explanation, can only be understood in relation to other social processes. There are no ‘single type’ experiences of migration given that global processes are the result of a complex interweaving of intended and unintended sets of actions of groups of people (Maguire, 2011b). Studying globalisation from a figural standpoint should, therefore, maintain a focus on multidirectional explanations and the wider network in which professional golfers are inescapably enmeshed. In other words, although all interviewees in this study are professional golfers their experiences are likely to have a variety of unique and similar elements and thus it is important to be sensitive to such differences and avoid an all-encompassing ‘broad-

brush' approach. Bloyce and Murphy (2008, p.122) argue for a focus on the “complex and dynamic human figurations, or the shifting differential interdependency ties or power relationships involved. These were themselves the outcome of the intended and unplanned dimensions of the preceding figurations, as were the outcome of their own dynamics”. Given social processes are nothing more and nothing less than human beings in action it is argued there should be a focus on the shifting dynamic relationships which people in the figurations form. From this viewpoint, it is likely that relationships between professional golfers and others enmeshed in their figuration will be constantly in flux. For example, there may be relationships between players on tour who have a level of togetherness, given the fact they are employed in the same occupation, however, at the same time, they are also in direct competition with each other. Similarly, the relationship between professional golfers and their sponsorship network is also likely to be constantly in flux. Sponsors will, at times, be in stronger or weaker negotiating positions, for example, depending on the relative skill level of the player in question. During interviews, therefore, it was important to encourage players to speak about how their relationships changed from one situation to another². The interdependencies which characterise relationships within figurations, that both reflect and stimulate the complex interweaving actions among people, are therefore central to this study (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Professional golfers are not viewed as a homogenous group but as consisting of a variety of different people with different experiences who will have undertaken various routes to get to their current position. Similarly, Bloyce and Murphy (2008) argue that social groups, such as the professional golfers interviewed here, should

² A more detailed examination of the actual methodological practices employed in this study is included in chapter four.

not be viewed as unified thinking and acting entities, but rather are people that are in fact diverse. Elias (1978) argued that academics should act as ‘destroyers of myths’ in order to provide a more ‘reality-congruent’ or ‘object-adequate’ account of the issue at hand. Given the sheer complexity of the social processes to which arguments and analysis are bound, explanations can only be seen as having degrees of adequacy (Elias, 1978). There is no such thing as ‘ultimate truth’, and, rather, all explanations are inevitably characterised by a number of gaps and uncertainties. The job of the social scientist in this instance is to critically assess these viewpoints in order to create a more realistic picture of the ‘taken for granted’ aspects of professional sport (Maguire, 2011b).

3.3 Differential power relationships and unplanned processes

This section focusses on another two key sensitising concepts of the figurational approach, namely power balances and the unplanned nature of human figurations. It is argued that the long-term developments taking place in human figurations have been, and continue to be, largely unplanned and unforeseen (Maguire, 2011a). The very complexity and dynamic nature of people in figurations, particularly over time, often give rise to outcomes that no individual chooses or deliberately designs (Elias, 2001a). Elias (2001a, p.15) argued that the “web of interdependent functions by which people are tied” forms a social dimension which no one group or individual could directly control. Unintended outcomes are considered to be “blind social processes” and taken as normal aspects of everyday social interactions (Elias, 1987, p.99). This argument will attempt, therefore, to focus upon both the intentional and unplanned aspects of the professional golfers’ figurations. The lived experiences of professional golfers, which includes the day-to-day

make up of their life, is constrained by the actions of others in the golfing figuration and beyond. Professional golfers are interdependent with other players, tournament officials, player managers, caddies, and others within and beyond their figuration which will give rise to a number of intended and unintended consequences that affect the lives of touring professionals themselves. For example, the tournaments which make up the EPGA schedule, and thus contribute to the golfers' nomadic lifestyle, are not in the direct control of players, tournament organisers, or sponsors but rather the results of unintended outcomes of the intentional acts of all parties involved.

Closely linked to unintended outcomes is the concept of 'power'. Figurational sociologists view the differential interdependencies of people by considering the complex and multi-layered distribution of power within a figuration (Maguire, 2005). In other words, the figurations which professional golfers are themselves enmeshed are characterised by various layers of power balances. The power balance which exists between players and their sponsors, for example, is considered to ebb and flow over time. Power balances in the player-sponsor relationship may vary during the course of a season given factors associated with the player, such as player performances, or factors associated with the sponsoring company, such as financial markets. Figurational sociologists attempt to highlight the sheer complexity of such power relationships. Furthermore, Elias (1978, p.116) referred to power as "an attribute of relationships" which does not exist without reference to other people. In other words, power is viewed not as a substance or property possessed by particular groups, but rather as a structural characteristic of all human relationships (Elias, 1978). At the centre of changing

figurations is a fluctuating balance of power moving to and fro, from one individual and then to another, some quick and others slower (Mennell, 1992). Power balances between people are therefore considered as dynamic, changing over time and place. In this study it is likely that some power balances between people in the golfers' figuration will change very quickly and others change much slower, which will affect how golfers view such relationships and thus contour their lives more generally. A clear example of this may be when elite amateurs turn professional, which is likely to affect players' lives in many ways. Becoming 'officially' able to play golf for money is likely to be accompanied by some quick power balance changes, such as players' bargaining power in relation to potential sponsors, in addition to some slower changes in other parts of their lives, such as those associated with the actual technical aspects of playing the game of golf, for example, which may change very little from when playing as an elite amateur.

Maguire (2005) refers to power geometries which reflect both the spatial expansion of a figuration and the long-term processual development of it over time. In other words, power balances between people vary over time, both in terms of increasing degrees of power and also the rate to which these power balances may change, given the lengthening chains of interdependencies. The lengthening chains of interdependencies which characterise, for example, the increasingly global trails of touring professional golfers, are likely to be accompanied by an even greater ebb and flow in balances of power. Referring again to the golfer-sponsor relationship, particularly in the early stages of players' careers, sponsors are likely to be in an even greater position of power given the travel costs associated with an increasingly global schedule of events. However, if the

player wins a tournament they are likely to be in an even stronger market position given the international exposure new golfing markets may bring. This example also highlights how the balance of power between people in the golfer's figuration is likely to change in different contexts. Furthermore, power geometries also highlight how different dimensions of the same relationships may affect lives in different ways. Through maintaining a focus on the ways in which power operates within the professional golfer network in relation to, for example, the sponsorship scenario provided here, it should be possible to illuminate how power balances change at different points in time, and indicate how these changes may enable and constrain aspects of the golfers' lives.

Elias (1978) argues that power is a question of relative balances, never of absolute possession or absolute deprivation as no one group or individual is ever absolutely powerful or absolutely powerless. The fluctuating balance of power is a structural characteristic of every figuration and it also highlights the constraining and enabling aspects of human relations. This standpoint deviates from an absolutist view of power whereby some people may be said to be totally dependent on others and lack the ability to effect the overall outcomes. Rather, power is viewed in relational terms which both enables and constrains everyone in relationships. Power, therefore, is more or less unequally distributed through the figuration. From this viewpoint, even those groups which are considered relatively powerful, such as professional sportspeople, are themselves constrained by the varying networks of relationships that they are involved in. At the same time, this is not to suggest that imbalances of power do not exist. For example, it is likely that in the world of professional golf there will be heavy imbalances

of power evident between the most successful players and lower ranked golfers. The higher ranked players may exercise a greater degree of power in regards to, for example, scheduling the events they wish to play during the season for instance. The key point, however, is that even this elite group of players will never exercise total control over their lives as ultimately they are inextricably bound by the figurations which they find themselves in. As such, any individual's power is enabled and constrained by the relational network of which they are themselves a part. This project attempted to maintain a focus on the dynamic power relationships which characterise golfers' wider figurations by encouraging players to discuss changes during their careers. Taking such an approach aimed to help encourage a focus on the power struggles which characterise the golfer network and effects of such struggles. For example, this may be in regard to the increasing variety of different courses in multiple countries that professional golfers are exposed to and how this affects their social selves.

The explanatory concept of game models can be used to indicate some of the complexities associated with power (Maguire, 2005). In this respect, Elias (1978) referred to 'game models' as a mental experiment of simplifying, for explanatory purposes, the complexities of power and interdependence. Comparing life in figurations to competitive games, Elias (1978, p.82) argued that as all 'players' are interdependent their 'moves' are limited by those of others. In a game of chess, for example, the moves of one player are affected by the moves of the other. Using the simplified form of games to represent figurations, the key point is that moves of one person are influenced by the moves of others. Thus to describe the nature of the 'game', i.e. the types of moves which have

taken place, is important in order to help understand the complexities of social phenomena. It could be argued that in professional tournament golf, where the individuals are competing against each other, players are influenced by the shots of others, whether this be players in their group or seeing changes on the leader board, no matter how 'powerful' the individual player may be. Some players in a tournament will inevitably be in a position where they have a greater influence on who eventually wins, such as those who are technically better or have played the course before, for example, but even the most powerful players are constrained by the actions of others, as well as other things including the climate and style of course, and no one single player has total control on the overall outcome (Elias, 1978).

The game models conceptualisation is also useful in capturing the ways in which the number of people in figurations can affect relationships between people. It is argued that as the number of people in figurations increases, the power differentials between people decrease (Elias, 1978). In other words, as the number of players in a 'game' grow, to continue the analogy, the ability of any single player to control and guide the game reduces. The result is that the game becomes more complex and thus the direction of the outcome, or the overall issues at hand, becomes more blurred (Dopson & Waddington, 1996). For example, it could be argued that increases in different countries with a variety of styles of courses hosting EPGA tournaments, which also require different approaches to play, further reduces the ability of any one player to control the overall outcome of a tournament. Although the professional golfers may not ever directly 'see' the individuals who make the decisions on where tournaments are held, which is the combined result of

many different groups of people, these groups are part of the broader golfer figuration and thus players are affected by the actions they take, and as the numbers of actions from such people increase the ability of any one player to control the outcome of the tournament decreases. The opposite is also the case, as the number of players rises during the course of a game the result of the interweaving moves of large numbers of people serves to increasingly constrain the moves of every single player (Dopson & Waddington, 1996). In other words, the more complex the make-up of people in figurations gives rise to a scenario whereby any one individual will have less control over their own particular actions which will depend largely on the actions of other groups of people. Thus, the ‘interwoven web’ of moves of each game follows a largely ‘blind’ course of events (Elias, 1978). Lastly, the more relatively equal the power relations among large numbers of people and groups, the more likely it is that the outcome will be somewhat different to what any single person or group has planned or anticipated (Elias, 1978). For example, the growing numbers of aspiring professional golfers entering the sport, whose standard of skill also appears to be increasing, serves to reduce the likelihood that they will, in fact, be able to make a successful career out of the game.

3.4 The concept of ‘habitus’

According to van Krieken (1998, p.55), human figurations are “characterised by socially and historically specific forms of habitus, or personality structure”. An individual’s personality make-up, or habitus, develops within the various figurations of which they are a part (Elias, 1978). More specifically, habitus is viewed as:

The durable and generalized disposition that suffuses a person's action throughout an entire domain of life or, in the extreme instance, throughout all of life – in which case the term comes to mean the whole manner, turn, cast, or mold of the personality (van Krieken, 1998, p.47).

A person's 'habitus' refers to internalised constraints relating to behaviour which develop both consciously and subconsciously over time, given the network of relationships humans find themselves inevitably involved in. Thus, habitus describes how "taken-for-granted ways of perceiving, thinking and knowing" about the world becomes second nature at a subconscious level (Paulle, van Heerikhuizen, & Emirbayer, 2012, p.71). A person's habitus shapes individual expectations, dispositions, tastes, ambitions, and actions. The development of an individual habitus is a long-term process which grows through interactions with people, begins at birth and continues throughout life (van Krieken, 1998). This process of socialisation develops most rapidly and tends to be more influential during childhood and youth where people are more affected by others around them. For example, as children grow and are learning about the world they are more likely to develop elements of their habitus from people with whom they spend large periods of time with. That being said, a person's habitus does continue to develop over the entirety of their life. As Van Krieken (1998, p.60) puts it, habitus "never ceases entirely to be affected by his [sic] changing relations with others throughout his life". Habitus, therefore, is viewed as a never ending process which is re-shaped over time given changing interdependencies with other people (Elias, 1994). The result is an individual's ideas and thoughts about the world become ingrained in their habitus over long periods of time.

For figurational sociologists, the ways in which the formation of habitus changes can only be understood in reference to the changes in the social relationships of the figuration in which they are enmeshed. As Paulle et al. (2012, p.7) explain, “specific social configurations, conceptualized both on micro and on macro levels, serve as the sources of second natures and as the dynamic contexts in which habitus function”. People’s personality make up, such as professional golfers’ views of their social reality, is largely shaped by their historical experiences and their early life. At the same time, however, habitus remains open to development as the interdependent networks people are involved in become more or less complex and thus more or less impacting on habitus (Green, 2000). In other words, how a person’s personality changes over time is a result of changes in their relationships with others. Therefore, by focussing on perceived major turning points in professional golfers’ careers, where it is likely the nature of their relationships with others may also change, it should be possible to more adequately explain the similarities and differences between the habitus of professional golfers. Elias (2001a) describes the way in which people’s view of self is defined in relation to others where the manner in which an individual sees themselves depends on the structure of the associations to which they view themselves a part. More specifically, Elias (2001a) argued that an individual’s place, or the way in which people perceive their place, in a network of relations with others strongly influences their habitus formation in relation to, for example, disposition, tastes and ambitions. The way in which professional golfers perceive their place in the world of golf, such as their perceptions of what a professional golfer should wear and how they should act during the tournaments, for example, can

affect the development of their habitus. The concept of habitus can also be extended to explain the norms, views, and meanings of entire groups in addition to individual personalities. Referred to as ‘collective habitus’, Elias (2001a) describes how entire figurations of people can grow to embody the same views. Furthermore, individual and group habitus can help to explain similarities and differences in response to social situations. Thus, how a person acts in a situation when they are on their own may differ from when they are part of a group. When part of a group, it is possible that the individual habitus may change to that of the most enduring habitus of the entire collection given the felt need to be accepted in part of that said group (Elias, 2001a; Reay, 2004). A group habitus may be used to differentiate between levels of professional golfers on each of the EPGA endorsed tiers and help indicate how this shapes how different players view their working lives.

Closely linked with habitus is the concept of ‘social selves’. This concept aims to help shed light on the processes that make people who they are and thus contribute to people behaving in the way that they do. Adopting a subtly different standpoint to the concept of habitus, however, social selves maintains an explicit focus on how people *view themselves* and act in relation to other people. Developed from a symbolic interactionist perspective, social selves aims to explain behaviour from the point-of-view of respondents with a particular focus on how people reflect the behaviours of one another. In other words, it is argued that how a person behaves at any given time is a reflection of the behaviour of others, and ‘social selves’ are the ‘objects’ which have meaning in the context of human relationships (Burkitt, 2008). According to Burkitt

(2008, p.193) social selves are, therefore, the “means by which we orient ourselves to one another in the social world”. It is argued that how people see themselves amongst other people is an important factor in their overall behaviour. Indeed, it is in this frame that social selves aims to help answer a number of questions people may ask themselves, such as: who am I, who do I want to be, and what shall I become? (Burkitt, 2008; Butt, 2004; Sullivan, 2004). The answers to these types of questions is sometimes viewed as purely individual to each person, and that to find out ‘who you are’ one must look deep inside themselves (Sullivan, 2004). Indeed, in western society there is a high value placed on individual freedom, creativity, and the expression of individuality, as such it easy to overlook the role that others play in how people view themselves. The answers to such questions will also develop from the society in which people are enmeshed, whether that be the effects of their social positions, institutional roles, or family and educational background (Burkitt, 2008). In other words, all people are born into social relations that they did not make, but much of who and what they are is formed in that context. The ‘social’ part of ‘social selves’, therefore, stresses the importance of avoiding cutting people off from the connection they have with others (Burkitt, 2008; Collinson, 2003).

At the same time, however, this is not to reduce individuals to the mere product of their society. In much the same way as figurational sociologists do, interactionists attempt to break down divisive dichotomies between ‘individual’ and ‘society’ to explain that the development of social selves is a combination of the two. As Burkitt (2008, p.3) states, the concept of social selves aims to “understand ourselves as social individuals rather than self-contained atoms” and specifically uses the words “social individuality” to help

breakdown the dualisms between the ‘individual’ and ‘society’. Simply put, the search for people’s individual self is a social activity that involves other people. As Burkitt (2008, p.1) clearly states, to “become an individual self with its own unique identity, we must first participate in a world of others that is formed by history and culture”. Indeed Burkitt (2008) makes a specific comparison with Elias’s theory of the civilising process (1994), whereby people had to constantly monitor their own feelings in the presence of others to a greater degree than before, creating a rational and controlling consciousness on the one hand and the drives, impulses, and emotions on the other, which had to be carefully watched and monitored³. The concept of social selves, therefore, aims to explain how ‘self’ is formed through social relations with other people and, specifically, how it is through these relationships that people can begin to form their own selves and thus start to answer the questions ‘who am I’ or ‘who are we’? (Burkitt, 2008). Furthermore, an individual’s ‘self’ changes both over the course of their lifetime and even in different scenarios in present day (Siegel, 2008). That is, people are not the same in all the situations they act in today, and they are also not the same person as they were 20 years ago (Siegel, 2008).

Birkett (2008) identifies three interrelated elements which contribute to the development of people’s social selves. Firstly, it is argued that the society in which people are born puts a “sizable imprint on the self we become” (Burkitt, 2008, p.3). More

³ A point which is made at various junctures throughout this study is that there appears to be a significant amount of crossover between the symbolic interactionist and figurational theoretical framework, however, there are some subtle and less subtle differences too. Where the concept of social selves seems to differ from the figurational approach is on the explicit focus which is made on the conscious mirroring of other people’s actions in society and the specific spotlight on ‘symbols’ which are exchanged between one another.

specifically, it is the power structure which characterises that society, whether that be a hierarchy of social classes or other groupings according to rank and status, which brings with it a culture of beliefs and values. Indeed, the culture and beliefs of those around us will judge, influence and mirror an image of ourselves back in many ways which contributes to the development of self (Burkitt, 2008). Secondly, the formation of self is a product of interactions with other people as the search for who you are involves what people do, that is the activities of others inform who people are (Burkitt, 2008). Self, therefore, is seen as something which is created in conjunction with other people partaking in joint activities and sharing ideas, which provides the ground for self-formation. People undertake a search for themselves in the world they share with others, and with the actual embodied individual they are thinking about, rather than in some type of isolated existence purely through their own personal reflections, thoughts, and feelings. More specifically, it is argued that people attempt to orientate themselves to one another by trying to gauge other people's 'selves' and thus try to determine who they are and what they are thinking and feeling (Burkitt, 2008). Thirdly, the previous two points are underscored by the fact that who people are, or who they want to be, is often the result of a political struggle within society (Burkitt, 2008). For example, the 'right' to become a particular type of person, such as successful professional golfer on tour, is something that has to be won rather than something which is given. The implication of this point being that people's social selves, therefore, are formed during struggles with others and not simply predetermined at any stage before such struggles.

What is particularly pertinent to this study assessing the working lives of professional golfers is how contemporary changes in society have affected the development of social selves. It has already been argued that the nature of work has changed in recent times and that geographical mobility has increased because of widening opportunities in education, employment, travel, and migration (Williams et al., 2013). The result of such developments has been a decline in generations living the whole of their lives in the same communities, among familiar neighbours, family, and friends. This has been accompanied by an increase in more superficial relationships between people located all around the world, while, at the same time, some people not knowing who live in their local community (Maguire, 2011a). Burkitt (2008, p.162) argues that these changes have made it “much harder for people to answer the question ‘who am I?’” adding that “we may ask this question more frequently because the contemporary world has fragmented to such an extent that the sources of our identities are no longer stable or secure”. Furthermore, it also appears this is exaggerated by the fact jobs are no longer secure for life and that family and friends will not always be close at hand (Adams, 2007). More specifically, it is argued that the “reference points” of familiar jobs, family, and friends become less certain and so do people’s sense of self (Burkitt, 2008, p.162).

It also appears that the significant growth in contemporary media technologies has impacted on the ways in which people see themselves (Burkitt, 2008). Internet, email, and video communication are not new phenomena, however, the multiplicity and diversity of media in the modern world has developed at such a rate that it is now firmly

embedded in many people's lives (Williams et al., 2013). The result is that the range of media people are exposed to communicates a "welter of different knowledge, cultures, religions, world views, ideas, values, lifestyles, and people" which affects people's social selves (Burkitt, 2008, p.163). In a similar vein to the figurational concept of lengthening chains of interdependency, it is argued that people are now able to relate to each other in ways that they could never do in the past, meaning that their thoughts are not only impacted on by people they see on a daily basis but also by people who live far beyond their personal existence. Indeed, it is argued that contemporary media can create what appears to be intimate relationships between people who have never met, such as those fans who follow professional golfers in detail and often relate to them in very emotional ways. The result is that the number and variety of differing viewpoints which are considered in people's thoughts in the development of their social selves has multiplied (Adams, 2007). As such, people must continually monitor and revise their actions in reference to other people both near and far away (Adams, 2007).

There is also evidence that contemporary developments in globalisation have led to increased job mobility (Elliot & Weedon, 2011; Maguire & Falcous, 2011). However, as the present and future job market is more uncertain, increased risk has become an integral part of most occupations (Kelly & Sugimoto, 2007; Roderick, 2006b). The result, according to Burkett (2008, p.169), is that people "can no longer take for granted the ways in which they act, or what they are likely to become in the future, because our lives no longer follow a preordained course". In other words, contemporary society has led to a state whereby many people have more freedom than ever before from certain pre-

established traditions, social positions, and biographical trajectories, and yet people are also filled with greater anxieties because they must attempt to sustain their self-identity in a world of fragmentation and risk which places people's social selves in doubt (Collinson, 2007). As has been detailed previously, it is argued that how people see themselves is developed in reference to other people. However, this appears particularly problematic in contemporary society because in order to relate to other people, individuals must have something about themselves that is relatively substantial and unchanging, so that other people can know them, yet they must also be able to change quickly in a fluid world that demands adaptability (Burkitt, 2008). In other words, many people are trying to create an identity without a clear idea of what the end result will be and attempting to do this in a fragmented world which "reflects back to us diverse images of who we are in the eyes of many disparate and disconnected people we know" (Burkitt, 2008, p.175). It also appears that this is the case for people who might seem to be relatively powerful individuals, such as professional golfers, as there is evidence that even highly paid elites are in fact dissatisfied with the increasingly rootless nature of their lives given that many have been forced to move in the course of their jobs (Burkitt, 2008).

It is important to explain how the notion of social selves relates to another key concept used in this study, namely habitus. Put simply, social selves refers to how people view themselves in relation to others (Burkitt, 2008) and habitus refers to the internalised behaviour constraints which develop from the networks of relationships people find themselves in (Van Krieken, 1998). Given that the habitus which people embody helps

form the way people feel, see and think about the world and themselves, it also influences the way they relate and respond to others, and thus impacts on their social selves (Burkitt, 2008). What Burkitt (2008), and others, therefore, refer to as ‘social selves’, develop from people’s habitus, that is their relatively stable dispositions and tendencies become adaptable to new scenarios. More specifically, it is argued that habitus is a concept that acts as a “middle term between place and self, in that certain habitual patterns of acting that are related to specific places become embodied in the self” (Burkitt, p.182). In other words, people transpose elements of their habitus in their performances of self in new encounters with other people from one scenario to another. It is argued that habitus is reflective given people’s behaviour will develop from their core dispositions in any particular scenario. A person, therefore, will have to be reflexive to a greater or lesser degree depending on the fit between their habitus and the social situation in which they are in (Burkitt, 2008).

If people viewed themselves solely on how they wish to look in relation to others, which is the explicit focus of the concept of ‘social selves’, then little of people’s past experiences and habitus would impact on their behaviours. This is clearly not the case and there is, rather, an overlap between the two concepts. According to Burkitt (2008, p. 183), experiences of “events in specific places leave behind their residue in our bodily sense of self” and thus the events people have been subject to remain part of them. In this regard, a person’s social self, that is how they view themselves in relation to others, is not ‘freely chosen’, but rather embedded in a person’s habitus. In this respect, Burkitt (2008, p.183) argues that notions of self are contoured by habitus and “filled with voices and

valuations of all the others I have known, [which] makes them all the more mine, because those places and relations to others are what constitutes me”. Social selves should not be viewed as socially disconnected but rather is intertwined with their previous life experiences which embody themselves in a person’s habitus.

At the same time, it should be stressed that this is a two-way process where people’s performance of self-image is also embedded into their habitus at various stages throughout their life (Burkitt, 2008). The essence of who people are as social selves is developed from their particular experiences in an area, workplace, or family, for example, which then helps form and structure their social habitus, dispositions, and perceptions (Burkitt, 2008). Social self, therefore, is viewed as a partly rational response to specific scenarios but also subject to historical experiences, while, at the same time, interactions at specific times and places also contour people’s habitus, and thus their tastes, dispositions, and emotions which compel them to act in a certain way. A working class person with a particular habitus, for example, would likely have to be more reflexive about how they act in the context of a middle/upper class leisure activity such as golf. Furthermore, it is argued that habitus has an influence on a person’s social self not just in terms of who they are, but also who they want to be (Burkitt, 2008). For example, people may ask themselves does their own self-image, or the image others have of themselves, fill them with pride or shame, or even a mixture of the two? This, in turn, influences the sense of fulfilment and satisfaction people have with their own social selves. This section has attempted to explain the connection between social selves and habitus and, in doing so, has aimed to shed some light on a situation where “human interactions and the self-

identities enmeshed within them are so complex and difficult to unravel” (Burkitt, 2008, p.160).

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has detailed several sensitising concepts that underpin figurational sociology, namely figurations and interdependence, unplanned processes, power relations, habitus and the connected interactionist concept of social selves. It is argued that a figurational viewpoint may help provide a more adequate analysis of the lives of professional touring golfers. More specifically, figurational sociology provides a framework in which the examination of golfers’ lives can be conducted with a particular emphasis on the dynamic nature of interdependencies, which are said to characterise all relationships (Green, 2000). It is argued that a golfer’s place in their network of figurations contours their workplace experiences. Maintaining a focus on figurations and ensuring this project was directed within their broader social context, therefore, should help offer an insight into the reality of life as a professional golfer by illuminating the ways in which power operates within the golfer network and how this both enables and constrains the golfers’ lives, whilst also contributing to the development of their particular habitus. The objective of the following chapter is to outline the ways in which the figurational theoretical framework employed, guides decisions made in relation to methodology.

Chapter 4

Research Methods

Undertaking research and subsequently adopting a method of approach – whether it be interviewing, surveys, participant observation, focus groups, or a combination of a few – may seem a daunting task. Indeed, undertaking research has been described as a “very messy process” (Bloyce, 2004, p.145). The objective of this chapter, therefore, is to shed some light on the research process by detailing the method through which this study was undertaken, step-by-step, by referring to: epistemological and ontological considerations; issues of involvement and detachment; the research design; sampling strategy; ethical considerations; selection of interviewing; and the process of data analysis. This will explain the choices made in relation to methodology and outline the ways in which the figurational theoretical framework employed influenced these decisions. The consequences that emerged from these choices are also examined in addition to discussing some difficulties highlighted by the research methods literature more generally. The chapter starts, however, with a discussion of the epistemological and ontological assumptions underpinning the research, with particular reference to the relationship between theory and data and issues of involvement and detachment.

4.1 Exploring quantitative and qualitative approaches: The epistemological and ontological debate

When conducting a research project it is necessary to consider the two conventional approaches to research typically represented by a quantitative and

qualitative divide (Bryman, 2012; May, 2011; Payne & Payne, 2004; Rubin, 2011). These two broad research approaches are said to differ on the stances of their advocates. On one hand, there are epistemological issues, which constitute a more or less acceptable or adequate knowledge about the world and how this is achieved, or in other words, the nature of knowledge, and on the other there are ontological issues, which is the theory of the nature of social entities, or in other words, the nature of reality and the social world (Bryman, 2012). In this regard, quantitative research approaches are underpinned by a 'positivist' epistemology where they incorporate the practices of the hard, natural sciences and represent a view of social reality as an external objective reality (Bryman, 2012). Therefore, quantitative researchers favour a deductive approach to the relationship between theory and data in which the emphasis is placed on testing theories (Bryman, 2012). Quantitative research typically produces statistical data from experimental methods such as questionnaires and surveys. Qualitative research is, contrastingly, a strategy that usually emphasises words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data. Qualitative research is underpinned by an interpretivist epistemological assumption that not all knowledge is of the objective kind, and an ontological assumption concerning the ways individuals interpret their social world. Interpretive approaches to understanding social phenomena, which largely originated from the work of Weber (1947), suggest that social reality is a changing property of individuals' creation to make sense of the social world. Qualitative research predominantly entails an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and data, in which emphasis is placed on the generation and explanation of theories (Bryman, 2012). This method typically produces

interpretive data from methods such as interviews, focus groups and documentary analysis.

Despite the clear differences between quantitative and qualitative approaches, the distinction between the two paradigms is often exaggerated and mixed-method approaches are becoming increasingly popular in the social sciences (Layder, 2006; Mason, 2006; Pope & Mays, 1995; Rubin, 2011). Mason (2006), for example, argues that social experiences, such as professional golfers' experiences of life, are multi-dimensional and as such must be explored from multiple dimensions in order to explain them. This approach aligns with a figurational standpoint where the arguments presented for adopting a specifically qualitative or quantitative research strategy are considered to be a false dichotomy (Bloyce, 2004; Green, 2000; Maguire, 1988a; May, 2011). Rather, research is viewed as a balance of the two, where the balance varies depending upon the nature of the research undertaken. It is argued that even quantitative research rests upon qualitative assumptions in the initial and interpretive stages therefore research can never really be viewed as totally one or another (Bloyce, 2004). For example, a quantitative structured questionnaire requires qualitative assumptions to draw results once the data has been collected. The results from quantitative questionnaires require a level of personal interpretation in order to make sense of conclusions and to be able to apply them to different scenarios. As May (2011, p.26) explains, "facts do not exist independently of the medium they are interpreted, whether that is an explicit theoretical model, a set of assumptions, or pre-existing interests". In other words, the social world does not have an existence which is independent of people's perceptions and interpretations.

From a figurational perspective, qualitative and quantitative data “far from contradicting each other” if properly combined can lead to a “more revealing, more adequate picture” (Elias, 2001a, p.48). Quantitative and qualitative approaches, therefore, are viewed as two ends of the same continuum where the balance shifts, changes, and sometimes interpenetrates throughout the entire process. From a figurational viewpoint the notions of ontology and epistemology also represent a false dichotomy. However, Bloyce (2004) explains that, in a similar way to the quantitative and qualitative debate, it is not that the two considerations are directly opposite but rather ontology and epistemology are so integrally related, or could be classed as interdependent, that it is not productive to discuss them separately. Throughout this project knowledge and reality were not viewed as separate entities but rather part of the same process. With this in mind, this project adopted a ‘two-way traffic’ between theory and data (Elias, 1978). This refers to a process whereby empirical data should not dominate theory while, at the same time, theoretical insights should be firmly enforced by evidence (Maguire, 1988a). From a figurational viewpoint, the research processes should involve a blend between theoretical orientation and empirical rigour. In this project, therefore, theory and methods have not been treated as distinct aspects but rather as a blend of the theoretical and the empirical. In a practical sense, this involved a two-way interplay between the theoretical framework of figurational sociology and the primary research method of interviewing, at various stages throughout the research. In this on-going process the relationship between theory and research was refined in respect to one another, whereby one informed the other throughout, through a combination of “reflection, experience, and practice” (May,

2011, p.27). For example the interview guide was specifically designed in order to enable the professional golfers to talk about how their lives changed over time, dependent upon their stage of career and life priorities. In relation to questions on the family life of a professional golfer, therefore, players were encouraged to compare their current situation to time on tour when they did not have partners or children. Furthermore, when interpreting the interviews during the data analysis stage there was movement back and forth between figural concepts – such as ‘habitus’, for example – and emerging themes – such as how professional golfers made sense of pay and conditions in their lives – in order to foster an on-going relationship between theory and data. The use of Nvivo computer software for coding purposes, which is analysed in detail later in this chapter, further helped enable careful navigation between the research themes and theoretical concepts used. Closely linked with the relationship between theory and data in the research process are issues of involvement and detachment, to which the focus will now turn.

4.2 Issues of involvement and detachment in the research process

The arguments surrounding quantitative and qualitative approaches, and the associated epistemological and ontological debate, are often accompanied by the terms ‘objectivity’ and ‘subjectivity’. From a figural standpoint, objectivity and subjectivity in research might be more adequately viewed as the degree to which researchers are emotionally involved in the subjects that they study. More specifically, it is argued that a more object adequate account of social phenomena is developed through balancing emotional involvement with emotional detachment. As Elias (1987, p.15)

stated, the “problem confronting those who study ... human groups is how to keep their two roles as participant and as enquirer clearly and consistently apart and ... to establish in their work the undisputed dominance of the latter”. Similarly, for Rojek (1992, p.17) involvement and detachment is referred to as “self-consciously distancing oneself from the object of study”. Figurational sociologists place importance on attempting to ensure that individuals’ own frames of reference, which are their own personal perceptions and ways of viewing the world, do not heavily influence the outcomes of the research. The findings of the study should reflect the perspectives of participants as closely as possible and not be blurred by any ideological preconceptions the interviewer may harbour. Given that people are unable to totally distance themselves from the world in which they are a part it is argued that a more detached viewpoint is particularly important in social science research (Perry, Thurston, & Green, 2004). Elias (1987) acknowledges that achieving a greater degree of detachment from the research can, however, be difficult as the researcher themselves are part of society. Indeed it is possible insider knowledge on the issue at hand may influence the development of interview questions in the initial stages, in addition to how interviewee responses are interpreted during and following the interview itself. For example, the author of this thesis is a former county level golfer with experience of working at professional golf events and thus has a level of ‘insider’ knowledge in the game. There is a risk, therefore, that the researcher may have become attached to the feelings and emotions of the group being investigated and thus find it difficult to achieve the degree of detachment required to adequately make sense of the issue at hand (Elias, 1987). Indeed the concept of involvement and detachment has been met with some criticism on how exactly to achieve a higher degree of detachment (Rojek,

1992), however, some figurational studies have attempted to operationalise this procedure (Bloyce 2004; Maguire, 1988a; Powell, Thurston, & Bloyce, 2014). Various measures were taken to attempt to ensure a greater degree of detachment in this particular study. For example, care was taken during the initial design stages to ensure the interview questions were not biased in any way thus allowing for an open response from the professional golfers themselves. When analysing the interviews it was important to stay calm and relaxed, allowing the empirical data to guide the research and build a ‘story’ in the first instance, rather than attempt to ‘fit’ the results into any pre-determined ideological order. The initial story was then developed into a number of research codes with continual debate between the project supervisors who were even more detached from the immediacy of the overall process. Furthermore, given that the eventual results from this study actually deviated from the initial thoughts that the researcher harboured about the life of a professional golfer, adds further weight to the argument that a greater degree of detachment was in fact achieved.

At the same time as acknowledging the problems with achieving a greater degree of detachment, Elias (1987) also argued that complete detachment from the issue under investigation is unrealistic and, for that matter, undesirable. Referring to the concept of ‘familiarity-conferring’, Elias (1987) explained that it is undesirable to achieve total detachment as in order to attain a more in depth understanding of the issue in question the researcher is required to use their ‘insider’ knowledge of human experience to interpret what they have observed. In this project, insider knowledge on golf specific technical and tactical phrases, for example, was used in order to more adequately interpret how the

global spread of tournaments contours professionals' approaches to playing the game. Indeed the challenge for sociologists is thinking in terms of fluid and complex balances and blends between involvement and detachment. This standpoint differs from that of natural science researchers, and some other sociologists for that matter, who are striving to achieve a purely objective analysis of the issue in question. In reference to this point Elias (1987, p.14) explained:

While one need not know, in order to understand the structure of molecules, what it feels like to be one of its atoms, in order to understand the functioning of human groups one needs to know, as it were, from the inside how human beings experience their own and other groups, and one cannot know without active participation and involvement.

For Waddington (2000), involvement and detachment means avoiding 'emotional reactivity' by setting aside personal concerns and ideologies as much as possible during the research process to help foster a more detached viewpoint. In this particular study, the interviews and coding was carried out with continual personal reflection and discussion with the supervisory team throughout each stage of the process, which helped to encourage a greater degree of detachment from the data and thus sought to "minimize the 'costs' and maximize the 'benefits' of involvement" (Perry et al., 2004, p.140). The supervisory team are not involved in the 'golf world', as it were, to a great degree and this served to help ensure the project was undertaken from a more 'distanced' point of view where appropriate. Elias's concept of involvement and detachment aims to help the researcher navigate between the 'real' rather than 'ideal' types of research often adopted by the natural sciences and was a key part of this particular project (Baur & Ernst, 2011).

4.3 Research design and sampling strategy

The research design adopted for this project was a ‘case study’ approach which involved an in depth analysis of the lives of touring professional golfers. Case studies are typically concerned with the particular complexities of a specific case in order to explain how social phenomena develops over time (Bryman, 2012). They allow researchers to examine contextual conditions that may be pertinent to particular groups of people by exploring social phenomena in their ‘real-life’ context (Bryman, 2012). It is argued that such an approach enables a greater focus on the detailed patterns of relationships, interdependencies and interactions between people (Denscombe, 1998; Dopson, 2003). In this regard, a case study design is appropriate to examine, in detail, the reality of the lives of touring professional golfers, as opposed to the unrealistic glamourised descriptions offered by media accounts of elite level sport. Case studies have been critiqued by some for having poor external validity as it is said that the particulars of one case cannot be considered representative of others (Bryman, 2012). However, Gibbs (2007) argues that by looking in detail at the particularities of one case, researchers can hope to identify factors that might influence the phenomena in other settings given the generalisations offered by theoretical insight. The quality of case study research, therefore, should be judged by considering how well the case relates to the theoretical orientation which is being utilised (Bryman, 2012; Yin, 2003). Roderick (2006a) employs a case study approach when interviewing professional footballers, however, he is also keen to note that caution should be taken when applying conclusions to broader populations. In a similar way to this study on professional golf, Roderick’s (2006a) sample was not

randomly selected and thus, from a ‘positivist’ sense, is not statistically representative of a broader population of footballers. The relative merits of the sampling strategy employed in this study on professional golf will be discussed in more detail in the ‘sampling’ section of this chapter. Semi-structured interviews were selected given their suitability to the case study approach. More specifically, by interviewing golf professionals with experience of playing on various levels of the EPGA tour it was possible to achieve a more realistic analysis of golfers’ lives and the seemingly enforced nomadic constraints which accompany an increasingly global schedule of events. This chapter will now continue with an analysis of the sampling strategy adopted.

Sampling is a process that enables the researcher to cover a range of scenarios which may shed light on the phenomena in question (Mason, 2006). Interviewees for this study were selected by their ability to provide ‘privileged information’ and offer an insight into the real life of a touring professional golfer. The primary data informing the discursive analysis was taken from a set of semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 male professional golfers aged between 22 and 56. This was the maximum number of interviews that could be secured. In this regard, it is important to stress that given the ‘closed world’ of professional sport it is possible that some aspects of ‘normal’ methodological convention require adjustments. For example, in a similar study Roderick (2003, p.70) states that even though his sample may:

Fall foul of specific methodological standards, it is important to note that, while footballers are often interviewed by journalists about their views on team performances and so on, it is rare for players, like famous actors and other people

who achieve celebrity, to grant interviews in which they respond to questions so frankly and for such an extended period.

Even despite these methodological points, 20 interviews was still sufficient to ensure that a number of reoccurring themes were identified and, furthermore, during the latter interviews little ‘new’ information, i.e. that which did not corroborate with the interviews already conducted, was being uncovered and thus saturation had been reached (Bryman, 2012; Rubin, 2011). Even despite the concerns associated with securing interviews, saturation point was determined by the quality of the analysis that was emerging in terms of its depth and ability to explain the nomadic lifestyles of professional golfers. Theoretical categories were developed to a point where no new ideas or themes were being generated that challenged or refined the explanations already uncovered (Bryman, 2012; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Comparing responses between interviewees allowed for the findings to be corroborated between players and thus enhance the overall validity of the study.

According to Mays and Pope (2000, p.52), the objective of the sampling method is to “include as many of the factors as possible” that might affect the issue under scrutiny. With this in mind it was considered important to interview players with a variety of career trajectories. Participants were recruited according to criteria which ensured a cross section of players representing all three tiers of the EPGA tour, in addition to a group of players who had operated ‘above’ this. In other words, the sample included a group of players above the EPGA tour whose world ranking meant they had a greater ability to pick and choose events and played what arguably could be termed a

‘world tour’ consisting of a combination of EPGA, USPGA, and other tournaments sanctioned by various worldwide organisations. This said, even the players in this elite band had a significant amount of experience playing EPGA tour events at various stages of their careers. Players were selected, therefore, on their ability to provide an insight across the entire spectrum of touring professional golf. This ‘purposive sampling’ was, in many ways, a deliberate, non-random selection whereby participants were strategically identified according to the likelihood that they would enable the researcher to explore the relevant research questions (Bryman, 2012). Although players were classified by a particular tour in order to provide a cross section of players for interviewing purposes, the reality is such that each player had taken a unique and often complex route to their current position and virtually all had experience of playing on more than one tour. The majority of players, therefore, had experience of travelling extensively on various golf tours and thus could draw comparisons between the different tiers. A detailed account of each player’s career trajectory and tours played on is provided in appendix A, and the processes undertaken to ensure player confidentiality are detailed in section 4.5 of this chapter. This sampling strategy also promoted a developmental approach, which is aligned to a figurational theoretical framework, by encouraging a focus on the processual nature of golfers’ careers and allowing participants to draw on experiences from different stages of their time on tour. Although the classification of players by a particular tour does include a degree of overlap, it did help to ensure a range of skill levels based on the EPGA tour rankings were selected. This said, and even despite such classifications, ultimately all of the interviewees are living the life of a professional golfer and as such all their career experiences were valid for the purposes of the overall analysis.

The first interviewees were recruited from personal contacts which stemmed from the researcher's employment at the International Institute for Golf Education (IIGE). There are, unsurprisingly, numerous problems associated with access to professional sportspeople for research purposes (Elliot & Weedon, 2011; Roderick, 2006a; Stead & Maguire, 2000; Sugden, 2002). However, the researcher's employment helped ensure access to a readymade network of player managers who represented golf professionals suitable for initial interviews. Players who were interviewed first were then asked to recommend others who they thought would also be happy to undertake an interview. This facilitated a snowball sample consisting of players who responded favourably and fitted the required sampling characteristics explained earlier. In other words, the purposive sampling frame resulted in a sample that was, in one sense, also a convenience snowball sample insofar as it consisted of those golfers who responded to the interview requests (Green, 2000). Interviewees were either contacted directly through email, or through their management team, and asked to be involved in the project. Interviews were conducted between April 2012 and July 2013 and took place in a private area of a golf club selected by the participant or at the IIGE at Myerscough College. A suitable quiet location was available for interviewing at each venue. Furthermore, allowing the participant to select a venue of their choice helped make them feel at ease with the overall process.

It is important to stress once more that given some interviewees were recruited as the result of snowball sampling, golfers were not randomly selected and therefore should not be considered a representation of the broader population of professional golfers in the

statistical sense. Roderick (2006b, p.250) identifies this critique of snowball sampling and describes his sample of professional footballers as more closely resembling a “panel of expert informants, which results in a body of coherent testimony”. Although this group of golfers does not meet the technical criteria of a statistically representative sample it does provide data which are rare in professional golf. Professional sportspeople are public figures who acquire varying degrees of celebrity status and do not usually grant permission for unknown people to interview them for extended periods (Roderick, 2006a). As such, qualitative data of this type are rare in golf and academic research into elite sport more generally. Professional golfers are mostly interviewed by journalists and as with other celebrities they mostly confine themselves to prepared sound bites and generalised comments. They rarely, if ever, grant interviews in which they respond openly to searching questions for a prolonged period as in this study. It is likely that there are very few people who professional golfers have openly shared the reality of their lives to and thus the data uncovered in this study are considered very privileged. Given the nature of research with professional sportspeople there were a number of ethical considerations, which will now be discussed in more detail.

4.4 Ethical considerations

The purpose of this section is to explain how the project aligns with the British Sociological Association (BSA) statement of ethical practice and will draw upon issues such as informed consent, secrecy, deception, and confidentiality. The project was granted ethical clearance by the University of Chester’s Faculty of Life Sciences’ Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) (appendix B). Interviews were recorded and at the

outset participants told that the process could be stopped at any time for any reason. Each interviewee was also given an assurance of confidentiality. The issue of confidentiality may also go some way to explain why the researcher found it difficult to secure access to more interviews with professional golfers. In a similar way to work on professional football, it is possible that part of the access problem involves a fear that professional golfers may be viewed, through the media for example, either as openly criticising the golf tours, their management groups, or more generally simply as ‘complainers’, which could deter potential sponsors (Roderick, 2006b). Interviewees were asked questions to which replies involved discussing their social relationships with families, ‘friends’ on tour, and issues of money in their life, and as such it was important to reassure interviewees that comments would not be traceable. As a result, players in this study are referred to as golfer A, B, C etc. and identifiable material such as exact years on respective tours has been removed, thus protecting the identity of the participants involved. All participants were informed that the researcher and supervisory team will be the only people to have access to the data. All sensitive files were password protected and kept on a password secured computer ensuring no unauthorised access.

An important ethical consideration for this study concerned any potential harm to interviewees. It was possible participants could be vulnerable to stress given they were discussing the highly pressurised lifestyles they lead. As such, it was important to closely analyse all conversations in order to guard against progressing down routes that may have distressed participants. This helped minimise the disturbance both to the participants themselves and their relationships in the professional golf environment. The chance of

adverse effects was significantly reduced given all participants were clearly briefed on what the study entailed, given an opportunity to scrutinise the participant information sheet (appendix C), and required to sign the consent form indicating they were prepared to take part (appendix D). Each participant was informed as to the nature of the study and the use of the data supplied before interviews commenced. Participants were given the assurance that they were able to contact the researcher at any time, from the details on the participant information sheet, thus ensuring their right to withdraw at any stage during or after the interview.

4.5 Semi-structured interviews

At this point the focus turns towards an analysis of the research method utilised in this study, semi-structured interviews. According to Miller and Glassner (2001, p.126) interviews are used in order to “generate data which gives authentic insights into people’s experiences”. This method was adopted to help foster an in depth investigation into the ways in which professional golfers viewed their social world. Interviews deal with participants on a one-to-one basis allowing for greater engagement with the participant and are typically structured or semi-structured in nature (Bryman, 2012). In this case, semi-structured interviews were utilised primarily so interviewees could elaborate without the rigidity of structured interviewing. A structured interview, on the other hand, may have overly promoted the researcher’s own viewpoints by forcing the interview to be guided in a particular direction rather than by the responses of the golfers themselves (Green, 2000; Rubin, 2011). Finally, unstructured interviews, which tend to be more ‘conversational’ in style with no set questions and just some rough prompts, were

avoided as this approach is generally used to sketch rough details of social phenomena in preparation for a more detailed follow up interview, and thus would not allow the depth of analysis required to generate meaningful themes (Bryman, 2012).

Attempting to identify the reality of sportspeople's lives, which was the primary issue under scrutiny, is a largely subjective area and as such it was important the interview questions were sufficiently focussed while, at the same time, ensuring they would not restrict the responses of the players in anyway (Bryman, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were therefore deemed most appropriate, steering a middle-course between the excesses of purely structured and unstructured interviews. The semi-structured interviews facilitated discussions in the golfers' own words, using their own frames of reference, and expressing their ideas and thoughts in their own way. This helped the researcher to remain open-minded and follow the direction of research, which was guided by the qualitative findings as they unfolded. Players were able to explain the 'reality' of their lives, allowing for an emotional response. This said, the data generated through the social interaction between participant and researcher during an interview is, by the very nature of human conversation, a two-way process and even despite the attempts made, particular probes and responses to the participant's speech may have shaped the data generated and thus there can only ever be a more adequate account of the lives of athletes rather than the 'absolute truth' (Bryman, 2012). Indeed the figurational viewpoint eschews the notion that there is, or will ever be, an absolute truth and research can only ever claim to achieve a greater degree of adequacy concerning the issue at hand (Elias, 1978). From a figurational perspective, semi-structured interviews also provided a

particularly suitable means of eliciting data on the figurations in which people are involved (Green, 2000). According to Green (2000), people's thoughts regarding their lives, which is the primary issue at hand here, can only be understood by examining the shifting networks in which they are a part. This is because, it is argued, the networks of interdependence which people are inescapably enmeshed enable and constrain not only what people do but also what people think. With this in mind, semi-structured interviews proved a useful method to delve deeper than the superficial aspects of golfers' lives and elicit a more realistic account of the figurations of which they are a part (Green, 2000).

A basic interview guide was developed and piloted with an ex-student from the IIGE who now plays on the Challenge tour. This process began with numerous unstructured questions and ideas written down but then, gradually, more order and structure started to emerge which forged the basis of the initial interview guide. The guide was tested during a pilot study and then underwent a modification period allowing for developments to be made (see appendix E for finalised interview guide). The interview guide includes a schedule of questions which were designed to be general enough to avoid leading in a particular direction, while also specific enough to maintain sufficient focus on the issue at hand (Bryman, 2012). The interview questions were designed to encourage players to discuss their views about the reality of work as a professional golfer. They focussed on the ways and extent to which the nomadic lifestyle inherent to work in professional golf contoured the workplace experiences of players and highlighted the increasingly complex networks of relationships which accompany this

(Green, 2000). In doing so, this also facilitated an examination of the ways in which participants made sense of what it means to be a professional golfer.

At the outset of the interview it was important to include ‘facesheet’ information of a general kind in order to help group and distinguish the players (Bryman, 2012; Walter, 2013). As such, the player’s age, nationality, years as a touring professional, and golf tours played on was recorded. This information was readily available for some players and completed beforehand, but, for others, it was clarified at the outset of the interview. Indeed, such information proved useful to help contextualise players’ views both during the interview itself and during the subsequent analysis. Interviews then began with generic, open-ended questions asking players “can you briefly talk about your first experiences of playing professional golf?” This question aimed to elicit a brief history of the participants’ route to tour and how they found the transition from amateur to professional golfer. According to Jones (2015), these types of ‘introducing questions’, which are meant to be relatively easy to answer, serve not only to ‘set the scene’ of the interview but also help put the respondent at ease and encourage them to begin talking comfortably. These initial probes were used to help to develop an interviewer-interviewee rapport and make the participant feel comfortable (Bryman, 2012; Jones, 2015 Veal & Darcy, 2014). Indeed it proved important to develop this rapport given the relatively closed world of professional golf and, furthermore, it may also help to influence the amount of trust participants have in the interview process and thus contribute to the overall validity of the project (Hubin, 2011). The initial questions helped to encourage the interviewee to consider their historical experiences on tour and thus allowed for

comparisons between their current position and previous stages of their developmental trajectory. From a figurational perspective, the developmental viewpoint which this approach encouraged is considered to be particularly fruitful given the fact that many empirical studies are temporal in their focus (Elias, 1978). Indeed, there are many examples in the sport migration literature which fail to consider processual developments and how these may contribute to contemporary experiences of globalisation (Maguire, 2011a).

After the initial probes, interviewees were then asked questions that centred primarily on workplace experiences of their international labour migration and included themes such as: explanations for tournament schedule; international schedule and their golf performance; relationships with family and friends; pay and conditions; and comparisons between different golf tours. More specifically, the actual content of the interview questions was devised by considering the nature of this research – such as the research questions, design, and theoretical orientation adopted – combined with the academic literature on the lives of sport migrants uncovered in chapter two (Charmez, 2002; Kvale, 1996). As such, this holistic approach helped to ensure that the empirical data does indeed answer the stated research questions generated at the outset (Lofland, 1995; Veal & Darcy, 2014). Similarly, Jones (2015) argues that the interview schedule should be a product of the interrelated areas of the aims and objectives of the research, the literature review, and the theoretical framework adopted. In taking this approach, the interview questions should provide information which, when analysed, will give answers to the overarching research questions. For example, a key aim of this research was to

assess the effects of the nomadic trails of professional golf on players' family lives. A number of questions were developed from previous research – see Carter (2007), Clayton and Harris (2004), O'Toole (2006), Ortiz (2006), and Roderick (2012) – including “to what extent does an international schedule impact on your ‘normal’ life?” and “would you say it impacts on your family life?” Similarly, an interrelated aim was to assess the effects of the global nature of golf on players' friendship networks. As such, previous work on friendship networks in sport (see Elliot & Maguire, 2008; Magee & Sugden, 2002; Molnar & Maguire, 2008a; Roderick, 2006a; Wacquant, 1998b), was used to generate a number of questions on this topic. Examples of such questions include: “do you have many friends on tour?”, “do you socialise when away on tour?”, and “who is it that you tend to socialise with on tour?” The interview guide also included a number of questions relating to pay and conditions in professional golf, such as “to what extent does money play a part in the life of a professional golfer?” and “what changes does playing golf for your living mean?” The content of these questions pertaining to issues of money in golfers developed primarily from the work by Carter and Parker (2003), Murphy and Waddington (2007), Poli (2010), Roderick (2006b), Szymanski and Kupers (1999), and Wacquant (2011). The questions attempted to elicit how players came to define their workplace conditions, and control and negotiate their social realities within the confines of the relatively ‘closed’ world of professional golf.

A combination of different styles of questioning helped retain room for flexibility and ensured free flowing conversation between the interviewer and interviewee (Walter, 2013). More specifically, the interview guide included a combination of: ‘direct

questions’ which aim to test the points raised in the literature review; ‘follow up questions’ which allow for general elaboration; and ‘probing questions’ which follow up directly on specific points if required (Charmez, 2002). According to Rubin (2011), the interviewer should be striving for depth and detail by trying to generate vivid answers which are rich with thematic material. As such it was important to ensure questions were framed in such a way that they were open ended in order to encourage longer, more reflective answers rather than short, undetailed answers. At the same time, however, it was also important to avoid questions which were too complex, leading, or used unfamiliar terms (Bryman, 2012). As such, the interview guide was devised using words that were likely to be more comprehensible and relevant to the professional golfers who were being interviewed (Bryman, 2012). For example, the term “rookie” is commonly used to refer to a new player on tour and was a feature of the interview guide. Care was also taken with the order of the questions to ensure the interview flowed reasonably well (Bryman, 2012). For example, interviewees were asked “how many countries have you played in as a touring golf professional?” before then being asked “how do you adapt your game when playing throughout the world?” Furthermore, questions on the same topic area were grouped together in order to attempt to avoid moving between topics too much (Jones, 2015). This said, even despite having a relative order, in reality the sequence of questions was altered to link with the themes as they arose during the interview. During the course of the interview questions were adapted around the basic interview guide to meet the personal circumstances of the interviewee. In doing so, certain questions were re-ordered to coincide with the data revealed and allowed for discussion of particular issues as they arose (Bryman, 2012). Such an approach enabled

flexibility in terms of the order in which topics were covered and allowed participants to respond more widely on the issues raised. For example, pay and conditions in professional golf was a key concern for many players who mentioned this early on in the interviews, which was taken as an opportunity to discuss all the questions pertaining to pay.

4.6 Data analysis

Interview transcripts were recorded and then transcribed verbatim. Common themes were identified and analysed from a figurational sociological standpoint. The transcripts were re-read periodically throughout the analysis to help develop familiarity with the data. During this process transcripts were annotated to identify possible categories and themes by which the data might be coded at a later point in time (Bryman, 2012). According to Rubin (2011), coding builds the analytic frame that is used to interpret the data generated. Coding was used in this study to ensure that sections of text concerning reoccurring themes of interest and emergent trends could be identified and retrieved. Specifically, Nvivo computer package was utilised to code interview transcripts and organise themes. Nvivo is a software package which helps manage the large amount of data often generated by qualitative research methods (Bazeley, 2007). This process of coding involved analysing the responses for each individual question, looking for repetitions, similarities, and connections, and then grouping together comparable responses (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Overall, the aim was to achieve a relatively detached and systematic deconstruction of the interview transcripts with the over-riding concern to

comprehend the ‘insider’ perspectives of the golfers’ interpretation of their lives (Green, 2000).

Nvivo was particularly useful given the depth of responses uncovered from the interviews and helped ease the process of organising data in the first stages, develop initial themes, and expand them as the study progressed. The ideas developed during the early stages were considered to be tentative emerging themes which may provide indicators of concepts developed at a later stage (Bryman, 2012). Nvivo facilitated the exploration of ideas by enabling the easy expansion and/or the merging of codes with the option of easily reversing any coding decisions that proved less fruitful. Furthermore, using Nvivo meant text could be easily sourced to its original context, thus making it more straightforward to analyse information with reference to the structure of the narrative in which it was originally produced. This process took a substantial amount of time in the first instance, however, contributed to the overall validity of the project by enabling the data to be stored in one place allowing easier navigation back and forth during coding and analysis. By moving throughout the data as the project progressed it was possible to develop findings which supported or contradicted emerging explanations and thus helped refine concepts so that they more adequately explained all, or at least the vast majority, of cases under scrutiny (Bryman, 2012). Codes then underwent a process of refinement where they were reconstructed into smaller elements (Bryman, 2012; Rubin, 2011). For example, it soon became clear from interviewees that life as a professional golfer can be a lonely experience and this was coded appropriately. The next stage was to further examine the transcripts in order to breakdown this overarching code

of ‘loneliness’ and thus search for greater detail concerning, for example, where exactly in their lives feelings of loneliness and isolation were experienced (whether that was during travel time and/or at the tournament itself) and what were the perceived reasons for these feelings (such as, who were players isolated from and why).

It is important to stress that Nvivo is limited purely to organisation of themes and was not used for data analysis purposes (Bazeley, 2007; Richards, 1999). As such, it was necessary to return to the theoretical framework of figurational sociology in order to make sense of these themes. Specifically, this involved a process whereby the more well-known figurational concepts were combined with returning to the original texts by Elias in order to explore his less familiar, although equally useful, ideas. An example of this is the concept of ‘meaningful contact’ that helped make sense of how professional golfers experienced feelings of loneliness on tour (Elias, 2001b). Such an approach enabled the researcher to explore in depth the ways in which professional golfers viewed their social world and also provide explanations for why this may be the case. The central themes and sub-themes were represented in table format in Nvivo to create a central framework (Bryman, 2012). Coding was carried out in conjunction with continual debate with supervisors of this project that helped encourage a greater degree of detachment from the data (Perry et al., 2004) and provided additional scrutiny in the development of codes (Mennell, 1992). Such a process ensured themes were constantly revised as the study developed and contributed to overall validity (Bryman, 2012). Although the data analysis revealed some variations among interviewees there were also clear similarities which occurred in the golfers’ accounts. As such the themes identified, which are the basis for

the following analysis chapters, represent relatively clear positions on the effects of frequent workplace circulation in professional golf. More specifically, the following empirical chapters explore: technical approaches to playing tournament golf; feelings of loneliness and isolation on tour; relationships between professional golfers; and pay and conditions. This interpretation of the data is supported by the inclusion of interview extracts which are representative of the data set upon which the analysis rests. The specific player quotes used are those which most clearly reflect the viewpoints of the majority of interviewees. Firstly, it is necessary to contextualise the scale and structure of tournament professional golf, and analyse what this means for the technical aspects of players' approaches to their work.

Chapter 5

Contextualising Professional Golf

As the sport of golf became increasingly professionalised and internationalised a number of golf tours developed which operate across various regions of the world. The USPGA tour was the first to be founded, which staged its original schedule of events in 1929. Some 40 or so years later, a number of other world tours were established during the 1970s, demonstrating the growing spread of competitive golf during this decade. These included: the Professional Golf Association tour Canada (1970), EPGA tour (1971), Sunshine tour in South Africa (1972), Professional Golf Association tour of Australasia (1973), Japan Golf tour (1973), and the Professional Golf tour of India (1977). Later, further tours in the Far East were added, including the Asian tour (1994), China Golf Association tour (2005), and One Asia tour (2009). Furthermore, most tours have one or more developmental tiers through which players can advance to the higher tour if successful. As has been highlighted in the methods section, players recruited for this study had experience of competing on one of the levels of EPGA tours, in addition to some who had the ability to pick and choose which tour to play on given their world ranking points, but who still had experience competing on the EPGA tour.

The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to provide some brief background contextualisation on the scale and structure of European tournament professional golf. More specifically, this will outline the hierarchy of levels, qualification procedures, and

include a brief analysis of the location of tournaments. This chapter will also introduce some of the empirical research from this study in examining the effect of the global flow of EPGA tournaments on players' approaches to the game. More specifically this aims to, firstly, identify the differences in playing conditions players are exposed to and, secondly, the ways and extent to which players attempt to manage these differences. This will specifically draw upon the figurational concept of diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties (Maguire, 1999). It is hoped this section will help familiarise the reader with European professional golf, which underpins the analysis offered in the remaining discussion chapters.

5.1 The structure of tournament golf

Tournament golf in Europe is organised into three main tiers (see figure 1). The highest tier is the EPGA tour, the second tier is the Challenge tour, and the EPGA endorse four third tier tours, namely: the EuroPro tour (UK and Ireland), the European Professional Development (EPD) tour (Austria, Egypt, Germany, Morocco, Poland, and Turkey), the Alps tour (Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Morocco, Slovenia, Spain, and Switzerland) and the Nordic league (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden).

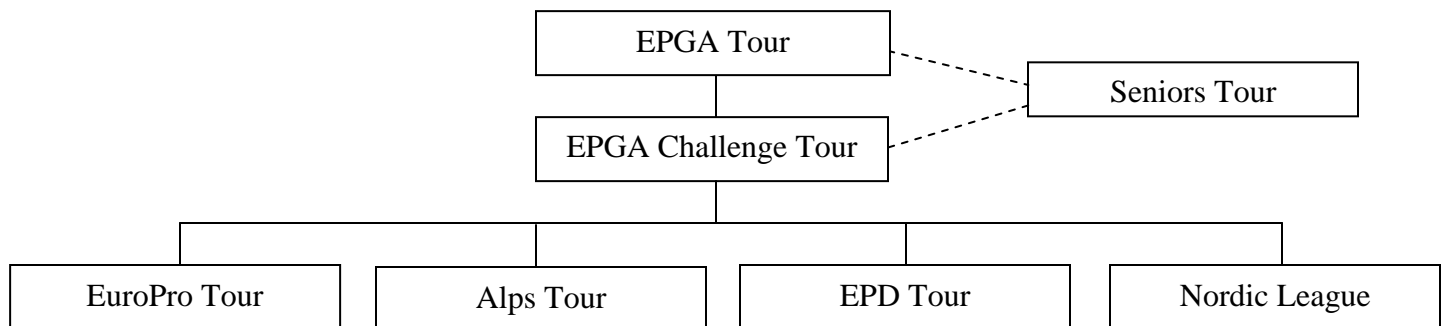


Figure 1. Figuration of European golf tours.

If a player wants to compete on the EPGA tour they must become a tour member. There are a number of ways to gain EPGA tour membership, such as winning previous EPGA, major, or world golf championship tournaments, however, the main route to membership for most players is to take part in qualifying school which runs each year between September and December. Qualifying school is a three stage tournament open for all professional golfers, and amateurs with a handicap of scratch (0) or better, and costs £1,350 regardless of which stage they play. Stage one is held at eight different golf courses across Europe with approximately 700 competitors in total. The top 25% progress to stage two and are joined by players who competed predominantly on the Challenge tour the previous year but did not qualify for the EPGA tour. Stage two is held at four locations in Spain with approximately 310 players. The top 25% progress to the final stage and are joined by players who competed predominantly on the EPGA tour the previous year. The final stage is held at one venue in Spain with approximately 156 players. The top 25 players at the end of the final stage achieve category 15 membership of the EPGA tour. The actual number of EPGA tournaments category 15 allows entry to will vary but the average minimum number of tournament starts for qualifying school graduates over the past 10 seasons is 18 tournaments (EPGA, 2014a). All competitors who take part in qualifying school are given a category of membership on a level of tour which varies dependent on their overall finish. The higher they finish, the higher the tier they will be able to play the following season. It is also possible that, due to some higher-ranked players pulling out of tournaments, for example, players lower down the hierarchy may be given last minute invites to higher level tour events. At the end of the season any

player finishing inside the top 115 on the EPGA tour will retain their ‘card’ for the following year. The remaining players would need to enter qualifying school again. There is also a Seniors tour for players aged 50 and over which has a separate qualifying school run on a similar basis to the EPGA tour but consisting of just two stages. The third tier tours also run a similar, but shorter, qualifying process.

5.2 Global flow of EPGA tournaments

As discussed above, labour market migration and geographical mobility is not usually normal in most professions, however, it is commonplace in sport (Roderick, 2013; Williams et al., 2013). Roderick (2013) specifically refers to professional footballers in this context, however, it could be argued that golfers lead even more nomadic lives with constantly shifting workplaces and places of residence. Extensive travel on a weekly basis remains a crucial aspect of any professional golfer’s career. Traditionally, Europe’s most successful golfers have migrated to the USPGA tour, not only for higher purses but also for competition against players who tend to be ranked higher in the world rankings, which, if relatively successful, would enable them to gain even more ranking points⁴. Entry into the top 50 in the world rankings automatically qualifies players for the four Major Championships (Masters, US Open, British Open, and USPGA Championship) and the four World Golf Championship events (Accenture Match Play Championship, Cadillac Championship, Bridgestone Invitational, and HSBC Champions). Player migration to the USPGA tour has left the EPGA tour under pressure from corporate sponsors to attract players back (Donegan, 2009). As a result, the EPGA

⁴ The Official Golf World Ranking is a rolling two-year system whereby points are awarded according to players’ finishing positions related to the overall strength of the field in the competitions which they play. As such, different competitions reward different amounts of points.

tour has been constrained to identify alternative sources of funding that, now more often, come from countries outside of their traditional remit of Europe. The 1982 Tunisian Open was the first event on the EPGA schedule held outside of Europe and in 1984 the tour became independent of the Professional Golfers Association (PGA). Such a move was borne out of a desire, by some, to develop the game commercially and expand the tour globally. By 2014 more than half of the tour itinerary is staged outside of Europe and includes events in the USA, South Africa, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Malaysia, China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Turkey, and Australia (EPGA, 2014b). The remaining events that are staged within Europe still require players to undertake significant travel and time away from their families. A professional based in England, for example, would be obliged to travel overseas to play throughout the majority of the year. Only six events from 51 on the 2014 schedule were staged in England, Scotland, or Wales. Furthermore, two of these events – The BMW PGA Championship at Wentworth and The Open Championship at Royal Liverpool – were not open to EPGA tour players unless they were in the world's top 50 or qualified through specific events. The focus is now turned to analysing how this increasing global schedule of tournaments affects professionals' technical approaches to playing golf, and in turn their social selves.

5.3 A global game with global players: Diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties in the working lives of professional golfers

The literature presented in chapter two highlighted that sport migrants are required to adjust and adapt quickly when moving internationally (Maguire, 2011a; Stead & Maguire, 2000). One aspect of this includes the actual technical changes sport migrants

are required undertake. For example, using Elias's concept of 'diminishing contrasts and increasing varieties', Maguire (2011b) argues that football has spread globally but is played in a variety of styles. Therefore, if a footballer from England played in a league abroad they would be constrained to adapt to the local style of play in order to fit in with the dominant styles in the host country. These requirements to adapt to a variety of working environments are, however, even more acute in golf, where professionals might be expected to cope with variety on an almost weekly basis – that is, they are expected to play in tournaments in which the terrain and environmental conditions, amongst other things, are different week in and week out throughout the tour. Indeed the participants in this study raised central concerns about such technical issues impacting on their social selves within their 'working lives'. That is, the players interviewed in this study are required to have relatively unchanging personalities in order to relate to other people on tour, so that other players can learn to know them, yet they must also be able to change quickly in the fluid world of touring professional golf that demands adaptability.

The spread of EPGA tournaments worldwide is the result of a long and complex process which has led to a diminishing of contrasts between golf courses at host venues, while, at the same time, in some ways they are increasing in variety. In other words, certain features of courses have become increasingly similar regardless of where in the world they are located while other features show evidence of increasing differences. More specifically, the EPGA tournament committee attempt to standardise courses on the schedule by setting criterion pertaining to: length of grass on the 'fairway' and 'rough' areas; width of fairways; hole distances; and ball speed on greens. A figurational

approach, however, avoids the notion that the spread or diffusion of styles of behaviour – in this case the styles of golf courses and ways and means to approach playing them – depends solely on the activities of established groups, such as the EPGA tournament committee. As Maguire (1999, p.215) states “monocausal and unidirectional analyses simply do not capture what can be observed in the study of local-global processes”. Rather there are a number of competing processes including, amongst others: the EPGA tournament committee; professional golfers themselves; green keepers, and even the typography of the host country, which means the resultant golf course is outside the complete control of the EPGA. Indeed, it is important to understand how professional golfers come to cope with these changes.

At the same time as changes in styles of golf courses there has been an interdependent process whereby professional golfers have adapted their approaches to playing the game. Players interviewed for this study frequently spoke about how they changed central facets of their game to play anywhere. Virtually all interviewees felt that some aspects of their game were ‘universal’ no matter where the course was – that is, players have had to develop a universal game, on the one hand, and, on the other, be able to adapt to subtle differences offered worldwide. This diminishing of contrasts between players’ games is neatly summed up by Golfer B, who has experience playing on EPGA tour:

To play well all around the world is [to have] no destructive shots. If you can get it in play and putt well then that’s the key ... the way the rough is you have to get it in play ... then you’re just hitting 3,4,5 and 6 irons all day long.

Similarly, Golfer K, an experienced EPGA tour player spanning 12 years, explained “long off the tee with no spin and good with your irons gets you around most places”. Referred to by some interviewees as their ‘core game’, there is a greater emphasis placed on hitting longer, more accurate shots and the ability to consistently hole putts. This is a result, in part, of attempts by the EPGA tournament committee to standardise course setup across all the events on the schedule. Golf courses can be set up in a variety of ways – for example, courses with wider fairways and shorter rough where the ball can be hit wayward with little penalty and, alternatively, courses with increased emphasis on short accurate shots rather than long hitting. Courses on the EPGA tour are setup to a greater level of difficulty higher up the hierarchy of tours, and interviewees identified the main differences as: longer distance holes, narrower fairways, deeper rough, and more complex greens.

Although there was clearly a view that to be successful golfers needed to have a ‘core’ game, there was also an overwhelming sense amongst interviewees that they were also constrained to have to adapt aspects of their game to suit the subtle varieties offered by courses on an international schedule of events. As Golfer Q suggested, “you can play anywhere if your game is adaptable”. The professional golfers interviewed for this study, therefore, felt that they were required to develop similar technical games to each other while also having the ability to adapt certain aspects wherever they happen to be plying their trade on any given week. For example, results from this study indicate that golfers are exposed to a variety of grass types because of the pressures to play an international

schedule of events. This is neatly summed up by Golfer G, a Challenge tour player, who stated:

You have to adapt to the country you are in, putting can be hard ... Your short game has to be pretty switched on because of the grasses ... If you're not used to it then you're going to chop it all over the show.

Although some interviewees identified small varieties in grass between events staged in Europe, virtually all interviewees identified significant differences at events in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Australia and North America. During the 2013 season there were 26 EPGA tournaments held across these areas and players are often required to move from playing in one continent to another in quick succession (EPGA, 2014b). Referring to playing events in India, for example, Golfer P, a Challenge tour player stated “the grass was different, it was really firm and if you went in the semi-rough by a foot then you couldn't keep it [the ball] on the green. It [the ball] would just go miles or nowhere”. It is clear from the results of this study that differences in grass type impacted on players' approaches to the game, and thus their working lives, mainly with shots played on and around the putting green. Golfer K, an EPGA tour player, rather explicitly compares the greens in South Africa, Asia, and India to “Shredded Wheat”, adding “the thing it ... gets you on is short game when you play the different grasses, definitely short game and chipping around the greens, with the different grasses it reacts so much different”. This is likely to have a significant impact on the golfers' working lives as these adaptations are another burden on professional golfers. In order to make the cut, and, therefore, make a living, they are being constrained to play in various conditions.

Given the variability and inconsistency of grass type worldwide, virtually all interviewees in this study identified the increased importance of consistency regarding the point where the club hits the ball when a shot is executed – known as the ‘strike’. Some interviewees explained how they decided to make technical changes to their golf swing in an attempt to increase the consistency of their strike given international differences in grass type. Golfer J, for example, explained that “over the years I’ve changed bits and bobs with my golf swing to make it a bit more what you would call ‘international’”. Golfer J is referring to a process whereby because he is constrained to ply his trade on an international scale, he has changed his swing technique to reduce the amount of contact the club makes with the ground during the execution of a shot and thus attempting to limit the extent to which varieties in grass will impact on the shot played. It is also likely that players in other sports, such as tennis, are required to make technical changes to their equipment given the different surfaces which they are playing on. Similarly, Golfer P identified changes to his technique as a result of different grasses:

In India the grasses were thick but dry. So if you got it [the grass] in between the ball and the clubface it [the ball] did what it wanted. You didn’t really have control but over here [in the UK] you knew what it was going to do ... I ended up playing more of like a chip and run rather than trying to fly it on to the green ... because it was so hard and bouncy.

Indeed the lower ranked players are constrained to play in an even greater variety of places – and thus, this actually impacts on their ability to be consistent – so further stacks the odds against them in being able to climb higher up the ranks. This, in turn, makes their whole lives on tour even more of a gamble, as it were. Developing an international

style of play is more important now than ever before given the increasingly international schedule and therefore key to the likelihood of a successful life on tour.

There are also differences in ground type below the grass itself and Golfer J has attempted to develop a technique which aims to reduce the distance the club penetrates into the ground thus reducing the impact of varieties in grass *and* ground types. In turn, it is argued that an ‘international’ style of play increases their likelihood of being successful on tour as their game is likely to be better suited to playing in a variety of conditions worldwide. Golfer J further explained the technical swing changes regarding short chip shots played around the green to make his game more “international”:

With chipping I’ve been working really hard on getting the first and second bounce closer together ... [the green] is so variable, particularly with different grains, it becomes really difficult. You’ve just got to be able to be as consistent in the pace the ball goes on the green with the same amount of spin then you’ve got a better chance when you move to different places that the ball reacts similar.

This is referring to the process of reducing the amount of spin imparted on the ball in an attempt to increase the likelihood that the shot will move similarly even despite the variability of greens. Such an example neatly illustrates the complexity of the network of relations that professional golfers are enmeshed as they are increasingly constrained to consider how grass types impact on their approaches to the game, and thus their livelihoods, given the international schedule.

Playing an international schedule means professionals also experience a variety of different climates and altitudes from one week to the next. Virtually all players interviewed for this study discussed the extent to which they were constrained to consider climate and altitude in their approaches to the game. As Golfer C said “you have to cope with that climate stuff, and that climate stuff is difficult”. Varieties in temperature can impact on the distance a golf ball will travel on execution of a shot. As Golfer M explained, in Marrakech, Morocco, the ball can travel 15 yards further depending on what time of the day it is, “with it being in the desert it was very cold early on but ... by the time it’s warmed up the ball can travel a good 15 yards further so you have to adjust during your round”. Golfer M is specifically referring to the quite unnatural environments which tournament golf is now beginning to be played on, such as the desert, which has no natural grass yet accommodates a sport which is played on grass. The increasing variety of climates means professional golfers have to undertake their work in environments where playing golf becomes problematic and brings with it its own set of issues players must deal with, such as differences in distances the ball will travel.

The distance a ball travels also varies dependent on the altitude of the course in question, which is yet more variance that a golfer must consider in pursuing their career. Due to the effects of air pressure and density, the ball travels longer distances at high altitudes and shorter distances at low altitudes. Golfer G described the effect of high altitude when playing in South Africa, “I played in the Johannesburg Open and ... the ball goes further when the air is thinner ... [You need to] work out how far the ball will go. It’s not the same clubbing”. This quote is representative of the general viewpoint of

the constraints players are faced with in their everyday working lives. Players are constrained to attempt to judge the effects of altitude on their game in the often short amount of time they have during practice time leading up to an event, which given the pressures on players to, at the very least, make the cut in order to make money, it is a significant issue in their working lives. Aspiring professional golfers are generally not aware of what awaits them when pursuing a career in golf. The reality is often much more difficult than they believe it is. Furthermore, the higher ranked players have the ability to pick and choose what tournaments they play in and thus are not required to play in such conditions as often as most other players. In the search to source sponsors for tournaments the EPGA tour are staging events in a wider variety of places and, as such, the players are increasingly constrained to play in a wider array of conditions which, is impacting on their life on tour.

The patterns regarding the global flow of cultural practices presented here may prove useful in understanding the nature of work in other professions outside of sport. In many ways, these points may help shed light on how the transient workplaces of some occupations affect technical approaches to work by highlighting the adaptive capacities such individuals require. Some medical doctors, for example, may take up work positions in remote countries in order to develop their skills and make them more technically proficient. Doctors have generally studied for many years and built up a technical knowledge base regarding medical procedures, which, when combined with contemporary developments in legislation detailing how they should approach their work, means there is less variety in the ways in which they can do their job. When taking up

positions in other countries doctors are required to draw upon such knowledge, however, are also likely to be required to apply it differently and adapt to the setting in which they find themselves. Indeed doctors who take up positions in other countries are likely to find that although they are still practicing medicine, the way in which they approach the specifics of their work changes given the culture of the location in which they find themselves. The key point is that the work of highly skilled transient migrants is fundamentally the same, however, dealing with other people in alien environments means that it is likely they will have to adapt how they approach the technical aspects of their work which, in turn, impacts on their social selves.

5.4 Conclusion

The argument presented here concerning professional golf is that a number of competing processes – including attempts to standardise course set up and typography of host country – have led to a diminishing of contrasts while, at the same time, an increasing variety between players' approaches to playing the game. To make sense of workplaces which are constantly in flux, professional golfers are constrained to develop similar games to each other, with a large emphasis on hitting long, accurate shots and good putting while, at the same time, there is a combined process towards an increasing variety of approaches whereby players are required to manage differences in playing conditions from one week to the next. More specifically, it is argued that players manage differences in grass type, climate, and altitude by making changes in their technique, types of shots they play, course management, and preparation. These processes should not be reduced to the singular, they are both sides of the same coin, and represent nothing

more than the results of decisions by people involved in the golfing figuration, including, amongst others, the EPGA tournament committee, professional golfers themselves, and green keepers.

Players must learn to cope and adapt quickly in order to maintain their status on tour and are constrained to make sense of the increasingly global schedule of events, and varieties in workplace this brings. It is important to note that for a professional golfer, the golf course represents nothing more than their workplace and this chapter has highlighted that the golfers are required to cope with the pressures of a workplace which is constantly in flux. A golfer's livelihood depends on their ability to be successful on tour, a central part of which is their ability to make sense of their changing workplace. Indeed while away on tour for long periods of time, the pressures identified here regarding changing courses only serve to exacerbate other elements of their lives, such as the feelings of loneliness many players harbour or the ability to earn money while on tour, which are analysed in the following three chapters.

Chapter 6

‘Lives Apart’

Feelings of Loneliness and Isolation on Tour

The literature review presented in chapter two highlighted that the migration of highly skilled workers has raised numerous questions about the consequences of transnational employment for employees and their families (Williams et al., 2013). Arguably, professional golfers are even more prone to such issues given the constant workplace circulation which is a central requirement of their occupation. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, is to analyse the effects of the transient workplace of touring golf on the lives of professional golfers and their families. This begins with an analysis of the feelings of loneliness and isolation which characterised the lives of the majority of players interviewed for this study. In doing so, it will draw on the concept of ‘meaningful contact’ (Elias, 2001b) and maintain a particular focus on the relationship between golfers and their families.

6.1 Feelings of loneliness and isolation on tour

It has been argued that there are specific conditions in modern industrialised societies, such as different patterns and types of work, which have contributed to an increase in individual feelings of loneliness and isolation in recent times (Franklin, 2009). Of particular interest to this study are the feelings of loneliness which have been associated with the growing international flow of labour migration work, where people are more likely to leave their closely knit home networks (Williams et al., 2013). Indeed,

as societies become more complex in nature it is possible that members can develop a feeling of being totally separated from an 'external world'. In other words, the issue of loneliness is sometimes considered to be a scenario whereby individuals are viewed as completely separate from other people. However, from a figurational perspective people are never totally 'cut off' from one another and loneliness can only be understood in reference to relationships with others as people are, in the real sense, never in total isolation. More specifically, Elias (2001a, p.195) argued that the "awareness of our own recognisability as distinct from other people is bound up with our awareness of our recognisability by other people". Put another way, loneliness and isolation are borne out of a person's *perception* of being cut off from others, or the individual's *feeling* of being separated from a specific group to whom they belong, rather than there actually being a real gulf between them. The overwhelming majority of interviewees for this study perceived the life of a professional golfer as a lonely experience. For example, when asked to describe his life, Golfer K, an EPGA tour player for a period spanning 12 years, said "the word that jumps in my head is lonely". From a figurational perspective, this loneliness experienced by professional golfers is a result of their perceived relationship with other people, however, this does not mean that such feelings are any less powerful. In fact, a professional golfer's place on the world golf tours is a situation which fosters a distorted self-image where some players see themselves as totally on their own and, thus, this state of mind reflects very real feelings of loneliness and isolation. This argument will now analyse the issue of loneliness in greater detail by considering the day-to-day activities which make up the life of a professional golfer.

Feelings of loneliness were expressed in terms of time spent travelling between events, when staying in hotels, and at the actual golf event itself. For Golfer C, an EPGA tour player of 21 years experience who would be considered a top European player, travelling between tournaments means “you’ve got to enjoy your own company ... [because there is] a lot of time in airports and airport lounges waiting for flights”. Similarly, Golfer S, an EPGA tour player for 28 years and winner of six main tour events, still had to endure the trials and tribulations of travel. He said that as a player you “go to the airport [and] wait, wait, wait, wait, wait, wait”. In addition to travel, time spent in hotel rooms was commonly cited as a reason for feeling lonely amongst interviewees. As Golfer K explained, “a lot of times [sic] you are spending it on your own ... you are in a hotel room on your own for a lot of the time”. The professionals interviewed for this study attempted to fill some of their time outside of the golf tournament using various media technologies such as Twitter, Facebook, and Skype to keep in touch with people back home. Additionally, many interviewees strove to forge relations with other players and engaged in various socialising activities⁵. Even at the tournament itself professional golfers are faced with large periods of time with little to do which can often lead to increased feelings of loneliness. For example, Golfer F, a Challenge tour player, explained that at tournaments:

You’re either really busy as a golfer or need to kill some time ... if you’ve got an early tee time you’re up at five [AM], it’s almost impossible to breakfast, to get the course, to practice then [get] onto the tee. You come off the course and you get some lunch and go back and practice ... generally speaking if you played in

⁵ The formation of these types of friendship we-groups, with the aim of reducing feelings of loneliness, forms the main focus of discussions in the following chapter.

the morning you get off the course and then you're not playing until the afternoon next day so you've got almost 24 hours to kill ... so then it's back to how to spend the time? ... then [the next day] you get busy again. You tee off in the afternoon, then get dinner, then go to bed. So it's always like that you're either really busy or you're trying to kill time.

Similarly, Golfer I explained that at tournaments players will "spend a lot of time training on your own and you must like your own company ... you will have a lot of time on your hands to practice and it can be quite lonely". The impact of the increasingly global nature of professional golf tournaments means that players spend long periods of time away from home and experience intense feelings of loneliness, isolation and perceptions of being cut off from the 'real world' during travel time and even at the tournament itself. The key point is that feelings of loneliness and isolation are exacerbated by the fact that, given the global nature of the tour, players often very rarely have any family or friends with them which would help pass time, and sometimes cannot communicate that well with said family given issues associated with travelling, such as differences in time. It appears that the glamorous portrayal of life on tour sometimes presented by the media is actually far from the 'truth', where many players are in fact lonely and bored.

Feelings of loneliness and isolation tend also to be exacerbated by spells of poor performance. As Golfer L, a Challenge tour player explained:

I've got some good friends out there [on tour] but I have found it hard ... a lonely place ... For example when you are travelling with four guys and they're playing well and you're playing awful, you're missing cuts and they're winning. They've

got the highs and the good emotions of that and you've got the lows. You're like one of a kind in that sense.

According to Elias (2001b), the tendencies towards increased feelings of loneliness are more prevalent when people are under greater levels of stress. It can be argued then, that the nomadic lifestyle of a professional golfer fosters a greater level of isolation than other 'regular' jobs which do not require the same levels of geographical movement. It is important to state that these feelings are not confined to players outside the top echelons of professional golf. Golfer R, who won three main tour events and one major championship, explained that playing professional golf:

Can be the most wonderful life in the world but it can also be the most difficult. If you play poorly it is the loneliest game because it is really all up to you. It can just be a lonely game. It can be gut wrenching, furious at times. It can get to a point where you don't like who you are because you play poorly. Then when you play great golf or good golf and you're successful and can make a living and win championships, win majors even ... it's the most glorious thing and you're revered by everyone but there is a grand canyon of differences between each emotions.

When players experience increased levels of stress there is a tendency towards enhanced feelings of loneliness (Elias, 2001b). Although professional golfers are never in total isolation – indeed Golfer R in particular was a major winner and former Ryder Cup player with legions of fans worldwide – feelings of loneliness were still experienced and particularly exaggerated in times of increased stress. Therefore, it appears that given golf could be considered an 'up and down' game, where even the most successful players win very few tournaments, that stress is never far away. In professional golf it is virtually

impossible to sustain high levels of performance consistently and, more often than not, golfers are playing at a level lower than their average. Indeed by the very nature of tournament golf, players tend to lose much more than they win. As such, when players are not on a 'high' it can be quite demoralising and, in some cases, it can begin to foster a loss of sense of importance and significance as well as promoting an even higher level of loneliness, isolation and sense of otherness. Golfer R also makes another interesting point about how he 'feels' through playing golf when not doing so well. In terms of player identity, Golfer R explained that he sometimes actively dislikes himself when performing poorly. Such stresses in sport have been explored academically (Noblet & Gifford, 2002) and, although this is not relevant to this chapter on loneliness, it may offer a potential avenue for future research. Indeed Golfer E, an EPGA tour player for 11 years, explained that life on tour was:

So much better when you made the cut in an event. You felt part of the tournament and the tour in general if you made a few cuts. I love being in contention but ... if you missed a few cuts then you started to feel like you weren't part of the tour.

In other words, failing to make cuts⁶, which is a hazard of the job for most golfers at some point in their career, exacerbates all of the feelings of otherness because it can seem to divide them from even the friendships they have on tour.

The experiences of professional golfers outlined here corroborate, to a degree, with previous literature on sports labour migration, which has identified the difficulties

⁶ Most professional golf events last four days in total and after the first two days there is a halfway 'cut'. The cut is generally the top 65 plus ties, out of a maximum field of 157.

professional athletes encounter while travelling abroad as: communication difficulties, loneliness and professional and personal challenges (Molnar, & Maguire, 2008; Stead & Maguire, 2000). Furthermore, sport migrants are required to cope with accommodating foreign cultures and traditions in the absence of family and friends (Molnar & Maguire, 2008). Similarly, in work on Danish women's handball, Agergaard (2008) argues that player experiences of migration affect their decisions regarding staying in a particular place with a particular team. More specifically, it is players of the same cultural background, who were also more likely to be friends, that settle in and integrate better within the team than those of different backgrounds (Agergaard, 2008). Furthermore, the well-being of the newcomers is often based on the fact that the foreign players share the same language and culture and might also be personally acquainted (Agergaard, 2008). This particular study on the lifestyles of professional golfers, which tend to be even more nomadic than other sports and involves almost constant geographical movements, builds on the work from Molnar and Maguire (2008) and Agergaard (2008) to explain loneliness not as a reason why players may move from one place to another. Rather, specific focus is placed on the actual experiences of loneliness and how golfers come to cope with this. Molnar and Maguire (2008) and Agergaard (2008) identify the factors which contribute to athletes leaving their homelands, such as to obtain money, prestige and/or professional improvement, however, this particular project offers a different focus with a spotlight on the actual experiences of the nomadic athletes and attempts to provide an explanation for such feelings. Professional golfers cannot simply leave one country and ply their trade in another if they experience any cultural problems, in the way some professional footballers may be able to do so, and as such feelings of loneliness appear almost

unavoidable. Elias's (2001b) concept of 'meaningful contact' offers a particularly fruitful way to examine these issues, and where the focus of this chapter is now turned.

Rather than present loneliness as a scenario where people are totally cut off from others, the concept of 'meaningful contact' has been used to help understand the broader interdependencies which exist between people (Elias, 2001b). The professional golfers here are not isolated in terms of people whom they have around them, such as other professional golfers and tour personnel, but rather in terms of a lack of contact with people whom they have feelings for given the time they are away from home, such as their families. As Golfer C explained, "the life of a tour pro is a tough one, underestimatedly [sic] tough. Because you're away from your base and your home and I'm sure that a lot of the guys now miss their family". In other professional sports, athletes may have their family and friends with them and thus do not experience such high levels of loneliness, however golfers cannot so easily travel with their families. Although the professional golfers interviewed as part of this study did highlight a number of activities they engaged in to try and reduce feelings of loneliness – such as reading, watching films, undertaking training regimes, visiting the local area and more recently engaging with a variety of technologies including electronic games, social networking, and Skype on mobile phones and tablets – even despite this, they still craved human interaction as a requirement for their social wellbeing. This appears to be the case not only for 'regular' tour players but the highly successful ones too. Multiple EPGA tour winner Golfer S, for example, explained that he needed the company of others or "you will be by yourself all the time and that does not work". However, the actual physical

face-to-face contact they have with fellow professionals and the ‘virtual’ contact they have with their families is no substitute for the ‘real’ face-to-face contact with loved ones. For some players, the loneliness associated with their lives can and does impact on their social wellbeing. As Golfer I, who plays on the EPD tour, stated “you can quite easily end up sat in your hotel room for three hours going crazy ... Just spending four weeks on your own [travelling] could be difficult”. Elias (2001a, p.201) argued that one of the fundamental conditions of human society is the emotive need for “giving and receiving in affective relationships to other people” and loneliness occurs when people are not able to spend time with others that they feel they need. Professional golfers may travel and live amongst many other people on tour, however, the feelings of isolation are very real if they have no “positive affect meaning for them” (Elias, 2001b, p.65). Indeed people who are thrown together by chance, although in the midst of many other people, can be in the highest degree lonely and alone (Elias, 2001b). The ‘meaningful contact’ that many professional golfers crave is with their own families, however, they are often required to spend large periods of time apart from them. The focus of this chapter, therefore, will now turn to analyse relationships between players and their families. Firstly, there will be a brief explanation of players’ family lives ‘in process’.

6.2 Golfers’ careers and family life ‘in process’

For figurational sociologists, the networks of interdependent relationships in which professional golfers and their families are enmeshed are viewed as fluid and ever changing over time and place. As such, they can only be understood as ‘in process’ (Dunning & Hughes, 2013). Results from this thesis reveal a dynamic and complex

picture whereby work as a professional golfer affects relationships with families in different ways depending on the relationship between players' stage in career and family life priorities. It is argued that professional golfers' lives are characterised by different types of family situations which players transcend through at different times in their career. For example, typical situations range from players having few commitments at home, to having partners who travelled with them on tour for some of the schedule, through to others starting families and subsequently having to live apart. It should be stressed that these are not viewed as uni-linear discrete stages but rather as fluid and blurred in nature with significant overlap. Similarly, there is no one single 'type' of player trajectory and individuals move through developmental stages at various different times. When starting out on tour younger players initially had fewer family commitments at home. For these professionals, their work on tour was prioritised with fewer outside responsibilities being evident. As Golfer G stated:

I choose to be single because I want to do my career first. It would be unfair on whoever I'm with. You can't just go away for a few months and leave whoever at home. Being single is a definite advantage as a golfer. You can do what you want and practice for as long as you want ... The older guys find it a lot harder. You always see it on tour ... they [older players] get home as soon as possible if they miss the cut to see their kids.

Similarly, referring to family commitments, Golfer M, a professional golfer for just two years, said "being young, I don't have too many commitments ... However, I do know players who have children or wives, and as a result plan their schedule a bit more round their family lives". Furthermore, some older players expressed similar sentiments when

reflecting on earlier stages of their careers. For example, Golfer C, a 21 year EPGA tour veteran said of the early stages of his career, “I think it was a ‘boys on tour’ mentality ... we all mucked in and hired a house, we all mucked in and hired cars together”. Similarly Golfer F, a Challenge tour player, explained that some “guys are 22, they’re living with their parents, they’ve only got their phone bill to pay and that’s pretty much it ... maybe a car insurance payment. They’ve not got mortgages or children or whatever”. However, even despite the accounts of younger players and perceptions of older players detailed here, which indicate that when starting out on tour players have fewer commitments, professional golf can still be a lonely experience for these people. For example, when asked “do you enjoy life on tour”, Golfer P, who had been a professional for two years and has no children, replied “no, not yet. I miss people at home ... I miss my mates, I miss my girlfriend ... I dislike missing people from home”. It would be reasonable to assume that this feeling would dissipate over time, however, the evidence uncovered in this study suggests otherwise. Players staying on tour for longer tends to happen in conjunction with increasing responsibilities back home, such as those which come with starting a family.

Prior to starting a family it was possible that some players’ partners could travel with them on tour. Indeed some interviewees described how they moved from having few commitments to what Ortiz (2006) refers to as having a ‘trailing spouse’. This is where the partners began to travel away on tour with players for a selection of tournaments on the schedule. In fact some interviewees suggested that having partners with them helped to reduce the feelings of isolation and loneliness experienced during the large amounts of

time away. For example Golfer K, who had been on the EPGA tour for 12 years, explained the ‘normality’ which was brought by his partner travelling with him, “got married in ‘05, and then stayed on the tour for six years ... had some really good years ... My wife travelled with me 15-20 weeks per year. I had some normality”. The overwhelming view from interviewees was that having partners and families at the tournament was preferable and this helped reduce feelings of isolation and dislocation. This sentiment is backed up by Ortiz (1997, p.226) who stated that wives of NFL players may be a “source of stability for their married ballplayers, which may make them more productive”. Using the concept of ‘home plus’, whereby it is argued that people attempt to adopt a home-like culture while abroad, it could be suggested that partners travelling on tour helps contribute to a more comfortable environment for the players themselves (Jacobsen, 2003). However for players who have families with children, creating this ‘home plus’ environment is almost impossible to do, particularly when combined with the growing number of international events staged in a myriad of different countries.

When players’ children reached school-age it was more difficult for interviewees’ families, including their partners, to travel so they tended to leave them behind in the family home, which increased feelings of loneliness. As Golfer S stated, “I don’t see my kids that much. They are too old to travel now, er, to be able to skip school”. In addition to this practical concern, a slightly different but related point regarding the financial costs of travel was cited by interviewees outside the higher echelons of the game. For example Golfer B, a Challenge tour player, said the “top players get the sponsors and can take the family away on tour with them whereas we are just trying to get by”. Ortiz (2006) cites

the reasons that contribute to families not travelling with players as: childcare responsibilities, the expenses of travelling, and in some cases the jobs or careers of the partner themselves. As has been indicated, results from this thesis highlight childcare and the expense of travelling as prohibitive factors for families travelling with players, however, the careers of players' partners was not mentioned. It is important to note that Ortiz (2006) solely interviewed the wives of professional athletes whereas this study only interviewed the athletes themselves which may explain such differences. Whatever the reasons for non-travel, the result is that players are constrained to spend long periods of time separated from their families, and for some with their partners at home bringing up the children. Roderick (2012) highlights that increased labour mobility has brought about changes in traditional partnerships between people and their associated household living arrangements. The cultural norm that married couples live together and the notion that female partners generally follow where the work takes them is prevalent in western culture (Williams et al., 2013). However, the work of a professional golfer deviates from this tradition and increasingly requires players to live apart from their families. It also became clear from the interviewees that living apart led to increased pressures on everyone enmeshed in the golfer-family figuration. As Golfer K explained, "I had two kids in three years. It affects things massively and I didn't realise how much it would play a part". The focus of this chapter will now turn to explore the pressures Golfer K alludes to by analysing the impacts of families living apart.

6.3 ‘Lives apart’: Professional golfers and their families

Starting a family has been described as a life changing experience which requires significant readjustment for the parents involved (Kerr & Håkan, 2000). Arguably, a professional golfer starting a family requires even greater levels of adjustment given the large periods time spent away on tour. It became clear from the data uncovered in this study that the occupation of professional golf, and the increasingly global schedule of events which accompanies it, leads to a number of pressures on personal family life. Interviewees spoke about the interdependence between their work and home life and detailed a variety of competing constraints and pressures which have a significant bearing on the players’ partners, children and family life more generally. Ley (2004) points out that the increased mobility of highly skilled workers entails costs as well as benefits and that they are not free from the problems which are often associated with migration more generally. More specifically, it is argued that transnational living arrangements place a “heavy social burden” on the families of workers (Ley, 2004, p.151). Similarly, it is clear from the data collected for this study on golf that even transient migration does not come without significant sacrifices for the people involved. Indeed the key point is that professional golfers are required to spend the majority of the week away from people who they have an emotional attachment with. Players across the entire hierarchy of golf who were interviewed for this study highlighted the difficulties of being apart from their families. For example, Golfer T, an EPGA tour major winner and former world number one, clearly stated “the hardest part of tour life is being away from the family”. This sentiment is reiterated by Golfer S, an EPGA tour player for 28 seasons and winner of six main tour events, who said that because of his golf, “I miss my wife, my kids, my

parents. I don't see them enough. And that's what is difficult about that". Similarly, Golfer C clearly articulated the difficulties associated with life as a professional golfer and specifically made the point that these are compounded by having more children, "as I got more kids it got harder to say cheerio at the airport ... I disliked saying cheerio at the airport. That was the hardest thing". It is the lack of contact with people that professional golfers have meaningful feelings for, such as their family, which further contribute towards the intense feelings of loneliness they experience while away on tour.

Additionally, some interviewees specifically identified parts of their family life which they believed they missed out on because of their work. As Golfer C stated:

I made sacrifices in terms of family life yes ... I would never take a two-week holiday in the summer and take the kids away ... We were always fighting [to find] ... a week here and a week there. That was a big sacrifice I think. I missed out on a lot of stuff ... picking your kids up from school every day ... friendships and stuff suffered a little bit. Wife and kids going to a family barbecue, I missed out on a lot of 'family barbecue type of stuff', and I think a few school events. It affected my kids in the school ... I think they missed out on me being there ...

School sports days and stuff like that. That was the biggest bearing.

As Golfer C expressed, it is often the day-to-day aspects of family life which players felt they missed out on. Some players can, depending on their qualification rights for exemption on tour, exercise some control over their schedule to help ensure that they are home for significant events such as birthdays, however, it was the everyday, taken for granted aspects of family life that players felt they missed out on most. Indeed, the

impression was given that although such events may be considered relatively small aspects of their families' lives, many players still considered that they were paying a high price for pursuing their dream of playing on tour by missing out on these times.

It also became clear from the players interviewed that the international schedule of professional golf impacts not only on the player but also the lives of their family too. For Golfer E, an 11 year EPGA tour regular, the work of professional golf is actually more difficult for the wives than it is for the players themselves:

You need a very understanding wife. It is often harder for the wife than it is for the player ... They have got to understand and adapt to the fact that you are not going to be there all the time ... They want you to be an integral part of their life, which you are, but a lot of the time you are not there.

As was the case with the wives of NFL footballers in Ortiz's (2006) study, the professional golfers interviewed here explained that their wives can also feel lonely or isolated in terms of time spent away from the players. Furthermore, in line with Thompson's (1999) findings on marital relationships in professional ice-hockey, some golfers' wives are, in many ways, living the life of a single parent by typically spending long periods of time at the home taking care of the children and completing chores. The individual golfer's family is not isolated in terms of 'social rootedness', which is identified by Roderick (2012) in professional football, as the families of golfers are generally in a familiar environment with, for example, other family members, friends, and the familiarity of local schools close at hand. The exception to this is when professional golfers migrate their entire family to a new place of residence if they qualify

for a different tour, such as a UK resident playing on the USPGA tour. None of the interviewees in this study had migrated with their family for such reasons, however, some players did cite family ties as a reason for *not* pursuing qualification on other tours. Indeed players' families may, arguably, be in a more difficult situation if they migrate to a new location to pursue a different tour as they would still be required to spend large periods of time away from the golfer, who will still stay away at events on the 'new' tour, but now with the additional pressures of adapting to a new unfamiliar home environment. The players interviewed for this study did highlight that their wives and children experienced a number of pressures, including isolation and loneliness, by virtue of their partners' work as a professional golfer. The significance of this point is that the perceptions many people have of the lives of professional sportspeople and their families is one of leading a life of luxury with very few cares, however the reality, it appears, is that in many ways this is not the case and the lives of all in the golfer figuration are characterised by significant levels of stress.

The distance between golfers on tour and their families back home meant players employed a variety of technologies to keep in touch. Long-term EPGA tour player, Golfer C, explained that when first on tour, and before more recent advances in technology, he "used to go away and send tapes home ... get them flown back by some of the pilots". More recently, however, technological advances including computer tablets and smartphones, combined with applications such as Skype, Facetime, Facebook, and Twitter, have changed the ways in which players keep in touch with their family. Interviewees in this study stated that these advances in technology helped to reduce the

negative feelings associated with being away from their families and there was a view that choosing to stay in a hotel with Wi-Fi connectivity was very important. For example, Golfer P said “I travel with my phone and my iPad and as soon as I get Wi-Fi I am onto it to get some normality back into my life. Get any news from back home. Catching up with your mates on Twitter”. Similarly, when asked about life on tour Golfer Q commented that “the use of email and certainly Skype helps communication and eases the stress and strains of being away”. However, even contemporary advancements in technology did not make up for physically being with their families and thus there was still an overwhelming sense of dislocation and feelings associated with missing families back home. This was compounded by the fact that when players are frequently playing in locations that mean ‘time zones’ were less likely to allow for staying in regular contact, even the current technology was not sufficient to maintain the kind of contact that the players, or their families, craved. This is neatly summed up by Golfer P who explained that feelings regarding family stem from “lack of contact, different time zones, different times, and just not seeing each other”.

Although it is now possible for golfers to communicate across the world, there is still no substitute for ‘tangible’ contact with their family and friends. Thus it could be suggested that the lengthening chains of interdependency between people, and the manner in which they have lengthened, has led to more superficial relationships – even between people who have more ‘direct’ relationships – such as players’ partners and their family. With all this in mind it seems sensible to assume that when at home the professional golfers would be able to spend some ‘quality’ time with their families that

they all craved, however, it seems this was not the case either. It is to an analysis of such work/life balance issues which the focus is now turned.

6.4 Loneliness, isolation, and ‘work spill’

It became clear from the interviewees in this study that the ‘public’ work of a professional golfer is not considered to be separate to the ‘private’ aspects of their life. More specifically, it is argued that the work of professional golf significantly influences players’ wider lives as they struggle to ‘break’ from the game. Similarly, research on the work/life balance of professional sportspeople, and highly pressurised jobs more generally, has highlighted how people struggle to break from work related issues in their wider lives (Ortiz, 2006; Roderick, 2012). Golfer P, for example, compared professional golf to other ‘mainstream’ jobs:

It feels like you have got your ‘work head’ on all the time. You just have to spend a bit more time on your work than your mates have to. They’ve got 9-5 jobs and they can switch off but you sort of take your work home. That’s a big thing that I’ve got that my mates don’t have.

This quote is indicative of how the work of professional golf comes to define the lives of golfers involved, who rarely leave their work at the workplace and often struggle to ‘switch off’ from the game. This ‘work spill’ into wider life can be problematic for all involved (Patricia, Moen, & Batt, 2003). Furthermore, it became clear from the interviewees that the partners of players partly experience some of the consequences of being a professional golfer but without the supposed benefits. There is evidence from this study that the golfers’ occupation spills over into the marriage and family life as boundaries are not clearly defined. The result is players’ partners are required to manage

and cope with golf associated activities and pressures. For example, Golfer F explained that even when away on a family holiday he felt the need to practice his golf which “caused issues at home”. Golfer F continued, to say:

I was trying to kill two birds with one stone because I didn’t have the money to just go on holiday. I didn’t want to feel like I was wasting it. At least if I practiced I felt like I was getting something out of my golf as well, something which I could then use to turn to more money in the future. More money or more success or however you want to put it.

Career-dominated marriages are evident in many occupations including medicine, religion, law enforcement, entertainment, military, academia, business, and politics (Oppenheimer, 2003), in addition to elite level sports (Ortiz, 2006). The evidence collected here demonstrates that golfers’ work and family lives are so integrally related, or interdependent, that they often merge into one and have no clear boundaries.

Professional golf is a significant part of both players’ and partners’ lives and in some cases the partners of professional golfers come to be defined by the work of the golfer themselves as it begins to contaminate *their* wider lives too. Players’ partners share many of the anxieties and problems associated with the sport but very few of the apparent luxuries. Ortiz (2006, p.521) specifically refers to the sport marriage as a “career-dominated marriage”. This suggests that professional athletes are married, ultimately, to their work and as a consequence partners are also married to that sport as well (Heller & Watson, 2005; Ortiz, 2006; Roderick, 2012). Ortiz (1997, p.225) rather bluntly states that what the “wives of professional athletes have to come to terms with is the reality that

their husbands are married to their sport careers and teams first, and to them, second”. Also in work on the NFL, McKensie (1999, p.234) quotes the wife of a player who said “in the world where I lived most of my life, I was an afterthought at best, and my existence was acknowledged only because of my connection to my NFL husband”. The result, it appears, is that the networks of relationships in which players and their partners are embedded constrain their ability to exercise choice free from the obligations and expectancies of their work in professional sport.

The data uncovered in this study has highlighted that the careers of professional sportspeople infiltrate the personal lives of golfers and their partners. More specifically, this study’s contribution is to highlight that sports which require constant circulation from one place to another can cause even greater pressures at home given the impact on living conditions and enforced separations. Furthermore, the work by Ortiz (1997) and McKensie (1999), for example, exclusively interviewed the wives of professional athletes and thus their accounts for the motives of players can only be taken as ‘suggestive’ as no interviews were conducted with the players themselves. This particular study on professional golf builds on this work to reveal how professional athletes *themselves* make sense of such relationship pressures. For example, Golfer F explained:

It’s tough on the other half. It’s very difficult to have a relationship in the game ...
It’s your single-minded pursuit of your golf game. Not many women want to be shared with anything that you love as much as them. You know any sportsman has a passion to the game which stems far beyond the relationship.

Additionally, for some players their work priorities were put before their families. Golfer N explained that “family commitments came second place if they clashed with my main events” and when Golfer Q, a third tier tour player for 8 years, was asked about the influence of family commitments he bluntly replied “golf comes first”. At first glance, such sentiments appear to contradict the argument presented in the first part of this chapter – that golfers struggle spending time away from their partners and have to live with the feelings which accompany this – however, it is important to stress that such relationships should not be conceptualised as an either/or scenario but rather each professional golfer can be more adequately considered as having mixed feelings, which vary over time and place. For example, Golfer E, an EPGA tour player, explained that “sometimes you can end up in a strange situation where when you’re on tour you want to be at home and, vice versa, when you’re at home you want to be away on tour”.

The pressures which professional golf can place on relationships between golfers and their partners, such as leading to feelings of loneliness and isolation for all concerned, can actually develop a scenario where partners grow to dislike the game of golf. Results here indicate that, at times, players’ partners were resentful of the golfers’ careers – which is both the very thing that partners support players with and, at the same time, what ultimately takes players away from their partners and family. This scenario was described by Golfer O, who said:

I know guys who have had phone calls ... when I was in their company just getting grief, getting loads of grief ... If the wife is at home with the kids then you know that’s nice sometimes and at other times it isn’t. If we were working in a

coal mine in Austria or somewhere and ring back in tears saying how much we miss the family then it wouldn't be so bad. But we play golf, and we go out and have dinner, stay in nice hotels.

This quote neatly describes the perception that golfers are having a good time and indulging themselves on tour. However, as has been indicated, the reality is their lives are frequently characterised by feelings of loneliness and isolation. Golfer O added that some players' partners have asked:

“What did you do this afternoon?” ... well, went the gym, had a little swim, and then went out to dinner. You can see how it can be construed but what are you meant to do? Are you meant to just book into a hostel so you're not happy? You're not going to play well are you? So that is one of the problems, that is a big problem yes.

This quote indicates that some players would feel it important to, if they could afford it, ensure they engage in more relaxing, enjoyable pursuits when on tour as it helped with their game – but whilst they were, in fact, missing their partners and families, it could easily be construed that they were away just having a good time. The interviewees in this study provided the impression that even some players' partners thought that the golfers are living a great life on tour at the expense of the family, who often spend long periods of time alone without financial compensation. The quote by Golfer O was specifically referring to a scenario where partners of players spend long periods taking care of domestic matters alone, while assuming their golfer partners are indulging themselves on tour with friends. The golfers were in somewhat of a double-bind requiring nicer surroundings to relax in the company of others who they could try and enjoy themselves

with, in the hope it would benefit their game, but at the same time not wanting to convey to their partners they had an easy and pleasant life on tour. Partners are back home expressing their own frustrations and, in doing so, assume players are out on tour having fun, perhaps at their expense, however the reality appeared to be very different.

So far, this chapter has detailed a variety of pressures associated with the lives of professional golfers and their families. There was an overwhelming view that the work of professional golf can place significant stress on relationships with partners. Similarly, Robidoux (2001) highlights that the conditions of work for professional ice hockey players places significant economic and emotional constraints on the lives of everyone involved in family relationships. Furthermore, some interviewees for this study explained that the pressures associated with professional golf, such as frequently living apart from their partners and families, can in extreme circumstances lead to relationship breakdowns. When asked about any sacrifices required to pursue a life on tour, Golfer C rather bluntly stated “marriage probably” and quickly added “although I’m probably not allowed to say that. I made some big sacrifices, yes”. Similarly, Golfer E, an EPGA tour player for 11 years who now only plays limited events said:

I am not surprised that many professional golfers get divorced because it can put a lot of pressure on partners. I have been divorced and my current wife, I am not sure she would have coped with me being away [on tour] ... At first there is no problem but then over time it will grind on them.

The lifestyle of a professional golfer has been cited as a reason the multiple divorces of Nick Faldo, Colin Montgomerie, and Greg Norman (St John, 2009). Perhaps the most

high profile case of relationship breakdown in professional sport is that of Tiger Woods. Widely considered to have a public image free from scandals and problematic behaviours, Woods separated from his wife Elin Nordegren in 2010 following a television apology in which he admitted, and apologised, for extra marital affairs while away on tour (Sanderson & Clavio, 2010). The pressures associated with golfers' relationships are also evident in the case of Rory McIlroy. McIlroy had originally said that his relationship with childhood girlfriend, Holly Sweeny, was the reason for pursuing a career on the EPGA tour. However, in 2011 McIlroy split from his partner and attempted to pursue a career on the USPGA tour (Donegan, 2009). It appears that divorce and relationship breakdown is an occupational hazard of professional golf given the highly pressurised nomadic lifestyles many players lead. This said, and even despite such pressures, separation and divorce in sport should not be reduced to single causal explanations such as time away on tour. There are a number of multi-causal reasons which lead to the breakdown of relationships and this study does not have the scope to provide a detailed analysis sensitive to all the factors contributing to such issues. However, there appears to be little doubt that the life of a professional golfer places a number of pressures on the golfer-partner relationship.

Finally, it is important to examine why many players continue to pursue a career in professional golf even despite the stresses it can place on the lives of themselves and their families. Golfer F, for example, detailed how pursuing life as a professional golfer led to the breakdown of his relationship:

So many of them [professional golfers] are divorced ... at the same time it doesn't mean that you don't love your life. It just means that before you even thought about having a wife you wanted to do this [play golf professionally]. I wouldn't have married my wife if I thought that within a few years of that I'd be under pressure to stop doing what I'd always planned to do for the rest of my life. I think it's just a very difficult life as a golfer's wife.

Golfer F is referring to the pressures from his former partner to find a more steady, reliable, and static career. However, much like others in this study, Golfer F had wanted to be a professional golfer from childhood. Indeed most participants had never worked outside professional golf. This confirms the work by Roderick (2006a), who argues that given the amount of time devoted to their chosen sport, in the form of training for example, many professional sportspeople often possess fewer transferable skills. Indeed many professional golfers have few transferable employment skills which makes it difficult for them to secure the steadier more reliable careers their partners desire, even if the players themselves agreed.

Furthermore, many of those interviewed in this study justified being away from their family in terms of an investment which may provide an improved life for themselves and their family given the potential financial security offered from a successful career in professional golf. This sentiment is expressed by Golfer B who explained that on the "main tour people are made, you see these guys and it's unbelievable. The rewards which are out there are massive ... You have got to give yourself the chance, I know I'm good enough". It could be argued that many aspiring

professional golfers are putting themselves and their families under increased levels of stress, and in many ways they are putting their lives ‘on hold’, for the potential rewards which may one day be offered from a successful career in golf. Even despite the hardships which professional golfers and their families go through, the interviewees in this study seemingly felt it was worth such sacrifices. If players did indeed earn the amount of money that many thought one day they could achieve, they would be able to bring their family out on tour with them and live the comfortable life which they envisaged. Drawing on work by Elias (2001a), it is possible to make sense of the experiences presented here, which are considered a characteristic of everyday life given the increased opportunities available in modern societies. For Elias (2001a, p.129):

The opportunity individuals now have to seek the fulfilment of personal wishes on their own and largely on the basis of their own decisions, carries with it a particular kind of risk. It demands not only a considerable amount of persistence and foresight; it also constantly requires the individual to pass by momentary chances of happiness that present themselves in favour of long-term goals that promise more lasting satisfaction.

With this in mind, accepting the drudgery of life on one of the many golf tours was, for now, considered to be an investment in their future and the potential gains it could lead to. In golf, significant financial compensation for the time away from families is only realistic for players who can break into the upper echelons of the game to earn the large sums of money on offer here. However, even those professionals interviewed who had achieved tremendous success, in actual fact, demonstrated that they did not experience a trouble free existence and shared some feelings associated with lower ranked players,

albeit with higher incomes that may serve to offset some of the challenges. Indeed Elias (2001a, p.129) argues that a person may reach the goals that they have been striving for and “perhaps the reality turns out less entrancing than the dream”, adding that “the exertion of the long journey may be such that one loses the ability to enjoy the achievement or to see it as a proper fulfilment”. It could be argued, therefore, that the increased opportunities for aspiring golfers to pursue a life on tour leads to a variety of different outcomes, many of which do not align with what many people consider the life of a professional golfer to be.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to highlight some of the pressures associated with the transient migration of highly skilled workers and their family lives. More specifically, it is argued that the increasingly global nature of professional golf tournaments means players spend long periods of time away from home and experience very real feelings of loneliness, isolation and perceptions of being cut off from the ‘real world’. Professional golfers are not isolated in terms of human contact, as they have other professional golfers and tour personnel physically close, but rather in terms of a lack of ‘meaningful contact’ with people they have feelings for. The work presented here moves beyond the often glamorised celebrity media portrayals of professional sportspeople’s families to detail the reality of their lives. Not only are the golfers themselves often presented in a glorified, romanticised way, so too are their apparently ‘perfect’ family lives. The reality, it seems, is that golfers are required to cope with the usual marital issues often associated with ‘regular’ mainstream jobs and not those of professional sportspeople. Furthermore, such

issues are themselves often exacerbated in the lives of those sportspeople that have a constant circulation of workplace location, such as professional golfers, who are away on tour for long and regular intervals where contact is largely superficial, at best, and remains difficult even despite contemporary communication technology. More specifically professional golfers, who are out on tour, and their partners, who are back at home, experience intense feelings of isolation and loneliness given the time they spend apart.

Furthermore, the pressures to maintain playing standards means that even when players are away from the golfing environment, golf seems to come first. The work of a professional golfer is not considered to be separate from the 'private' aspects of a player's wider life. It became clear from interviewees in this study that professional golf contaminates players' wider lives and ultimately they come to be defined by their employment in golf. Golfers' work and family lives are so integrally related, or interdependent, that they often merge into one. Professional golf is an integral part of both players' and their partners' lives and this interdependence significantly affects all involved. The golfers' occupation spills over into the marriage and family life as the boundary is not clearly defined. It also became clear that the complex interweaving of competing obligations between players' work in professional golf and family commitments can, at times, place significant stress on relationships.

Chapter 7

‘Friends as Enemies’

The Relationship between Touring Professional Golfers

Chapter six revealed how the life of a touring professional golfer is characterised by degrees of loneliness and isolation given the long periods of time spent away from family and friends on an international schedule. While away on tour professional golfers do, however, spend large periods of time with other players and as such it proves necessary to examine these relationships in greater detail. The central objective of this chapter, therefore, is to analyse how touring professional golfers adjust to life on tour by looking specifically at their relationships with fellow golfers. In doing so, the aim is to more adequately assess the extent to which the work of touring professional golf affects players’ relationships with their significant others. The significance of relationships between migrants has been previously examined in sport labour research (Bale, 1991; Elliot & Maguire, 2008a; Molnar & Maguire, 2008a) and broader employment literature (Conradson & Latham, 2005; Meyer, 2001; Voigt-Graf, 2005; Yeoh & Willis, 2005). However, research has tended to focus on friendship networks in terms of pathways, recruitment, and flows of athletic talent. In other words, these studies attempt to provide reasons explaining why people migrate and where they migrate too. This particular study aims to move beyond focussing on friendship networks as a means for particular migratory flows and seeks to explore more adequately how golfers actually view their ‘friendship’ with other players. More specifically, this involves focussing on the ways and extent to which players attempt to develop friendship networks and the increasingly

complex set of relationships accompanying this. In doing so, this chapter also aims to capture the complex relational network in which golfers are inescapably enmeshed and the extent to which they are enabled and constrained by the power struggles which characterise these relationships. The chapter begins by analysing the development of we-group friendship networks.

7.1 Development of we-group friendship networks

Even despite the high levels of individualism, loneliness, and isolation, which are a central feature of work in professional golf, various types of friendships do develop. However, these friendships are often forged out of a requirement for mutually beneficial needs, rather than through choice *per-se*. Virtually all interviewees in this study explained that they were constrained to develop friendship networks and, also, enthusiastically championed the development of them. As Golfer D, a player with experience of a cross section of tours, explained, golfers should “try and get a group of people around you that can help you become what you need to be”. Golfer D is not just referring to a support team, such as a coach or a manager, but also other players. Indeed most players outside of the very highest levels do not have a support team on tour and thus spend most of their time with other players. Similarly, Golfer F, a Challenge tour player, explained that to cope with life on tour players should “surround yourself with positive people ... pick guys who you admire and like and want to spend time with. And try to make friends with those guys because it definitely helps”. Despite the fact that the composition of players on tour is outside the direct control of any single player, many of the golfers in this study attempted to exercise some control over whom they would socialise with. It was the

feelings of loneliness, discussed previously, which acted as a major driver for players to seek out and develop friendship networks. As Golfer H, an EPGA tour player for 13 years, explained, as a player “you must be able to get on with people ... if you are on your own it can be a lonely life”. The key point highlighted here is the importance professional golfers placed on being able to get on with other players, particularly given the long periods of time spent on tour. Furthermore, players attempted, where possible, to socialise with other players that they perceived to be similar to themselves. As Golfer E, an EPGA tour player, highlighted, there was a felt need to socialise in groups of what was referred to as “like-minded people” and he added that to do this players are required to “find out who liked the same things as you do, who liked the same foods, who wanted to go out for dinner at the same time as you did”.

There were a variety of reasons given for why many players sought to develop these relationships. Engaging in socialising activities with other players, for example, was viewed as a necessary activity in order to help switch off from the game. When asked do you socialise while away on tour, Golfer S, one of the most successful players in this sample, explained:

Of course you have to because otherwise you will be by yourself all the time and that does not work. You have to balance your work, your life, and other normal social activities ... try to get out of the game. The main concern is to be too much in the game and thinking about the game all day and all night.

Golfer S is referring to the need to release from the day-to-day pressures of work in professional golf which characterises life on tour. Similarly, Golfer K explained that “you

can't go out there and just work, work, work. You have got to be able to chill out sometimes" and Golfer Q stressed that it is "important not to talk too much golf, you need a release from the game". These quotes indicate the felt need for an outlet and release from the game given the large amount of time spent touring in what was described by Golfer A as a "circus travelling round the world". The irony with this, of course, is that whilst away on tour the only way many golfers feel capable of achieving this release is by socialising with other players. So in fact 'golf' is rarely, if ever, off their agenda. Professional golfers' only 'outlet', it would seem, is with other players and thus they are never really 'away' from the game at all. The result is that even when they are away from the golf course the reality is such that they cannot switch off to the extent they may be able to while at home. Furthermore, it is important to recognise that professional golfers are not friends in the truest sense of the word, and thus most likely to keep the conversation at a superficial level. The reality, it seems, is that given that their occupation is the one thing they all have in common, the conversation, almost inevitably, is bound to be dominated by their work. Players need each other in order to try and forget the loneliness they feel resulting from their golf, however, it is very difficult for them to do so when they are surrounded by it, with little opportunity to get away from it – indeed the 'travelling circus' actually follows them wherever they go. At the same time, this is not to suggest that even when at home they can fully switch off, as in chapter six it was indicated that the work of professional golf can in fact contaminate players' home lives too.

For some, friendship groups on tour helped to create an environment like home. For example, Golfer P, a Challenge tour player, said it is important to “try and surround yourself with people who you want to be with. So it is more like when you are at home and more normal”. Golfer F explained that the events where he has been most successful:

One trend is being fun. And I don't mean late nights and I don't mean alcohol. I mean having dinner and laughing, [and] banter ... the more that you travel like home the better. You need your home comforts.

It appears that the ability for a golfer to create an environment similar to that of home serves directly to underscore their self-esteem and heighten self-confidence, in large measure because the players in this study considered that it helped improve tournament performances. That is, for some players the greater their ability to reduce the ‘grind’ of life on tour the better their performances in the actual tournaments themselves. Jacobsen (2003) refers to the concept of ‘travelling parochialism’, or ‘home plus’, in order to explain a scenario whereby large proportions of contemporary holidaymakers attempt to adopt a kind of furtherance of a home-like culture while abroad. So, while on holiday many English people seek a ‘home plus’ sunshine by gravitating to ‘English’ bars serving ‘English’ breakfasts, for example. In a similar vein, it appears professional golfers often look to develop a ‘home plus’ scenario on tour by virtue of the people they surround themselves with. However, given the global spread of the golf tours, and the myriad of places they now take in, this is more and more difficult to do – and for those that do not have the sufficient means on tour, it is almost impossible to do, making their working life even more lonely.

In addition to the tournament themselves, participants from this study identified that friendship networks helped them to cope with issues which arise when travelling between events. Golfer C, an experienced EPGA tour 21 year veteran, explained that players embarking on a career of a touring professional “must be aware of all the downfalls of travelling on your own”. For example, some players said travelling companions helped relieve the logistics of travelling and many had a network of golfers with whom they could share rooms. This appeared to be more common for those who played in tiers lower than the EPGA tour, many of whom shared rooms in order to keep the costs to a minimum and developed a group of players with whom they could stay. Travelling companions also helped because, as Golfer P stated, “travelling on your own can be a bit boring and a bit lonely”. Furthermore, in some cases travelling companions were also used to help avoid the culture shock associated with particular venues on the global schedule. For example, Golfer I, a third tier EPD player, explained that for some tournaments he would “go with someone as if you’re on your own it could well break you” and added “you don’t know where you’re going and if you’ve never been before it is a bit of a dodgy place at times ... there’s pictures I can show you on my phone of some of the dodgy streets in India ... That’s what you’re dealing with”. Golfer I identified Morocco, India, and South Africa, in particular, as he felt they were the most extreme examples of experiencing different cultures during the tour schedule, and as such they exacerbated the problems of isolation. It could be argued, therefore, that these issues are likely to have been exaggerated with the expansion of the tour schedule. The greater geographical diversity of the tour makes it increasingly difficult for players to set up a ‘home from home’ network to the best of their variously constrained ability, anyhow.

Given that professional golfers experience a greater degree of workplace dislocation when compared with many other sports, it could be argued that they place increasing importance on actively seeking out and forming quite specific groups with other people in the touring fraternity, particularly fellow players. Therefore, as is demonstrated above, golfers spoke about developing friendship networks for social reasons, whereby players would socialise together to help reduce feelings of loneliness, isolation, and homesickness and for what may be termed logistical reasons where players would travel and room together to save money. Elias (2001a) refers to this process as ‘we-group’ formation, which develops primarily out of the need for individuals to protect their own interests and survive in certain societies. More specifically, when referring to survival units to explain the process whereby people move away from close family and friend groups into new unfamiliar domains, which often happens when people grow up and enter work, Elias (2001a, p.120) states that people “leave behind close local protective groups ... and with it they lose their protective and control functions”. The result is that people are increasingly required to fend more for themselves and develop we-groups with other people to help with this. The term ‘loose collections of temporary alliances’ has been used to capture the features of patterns forged between people in community we-groups for mutually beneficial reasons (Dunning, Murphy, & Williams, 1988). Research into football hooliganism, for example, has suggested that smaller friendship groups, bonded together by kinship and neighbourhood ties, are replaced by larger groups who would temporarily unite in a match-day context for purposes of confronting rival fans (Dunning et al., 1988). In this respect, communities that tend to be

fragmented join together and facilitate a degree of cohesion in the face of real or perceived threats and mobilise the allegiance of those within the community (Dunning, Murphy, & Williams, 1986). The result is during times of increased stress people can assemble quickly and show loyalty towards the overall goals of the group. Similarly, for professional golfers on tour the loneliness and isolation frequently experienced means they have a tendency to develop allegiances in the event of these stresses. The development of we-groups in professional golf has a function for players' survival on the world tours. Players do, therefore, seek out and develop friendship groups in an effort to help cope with the prolonged spells spent away from home. This highlights the extent to which golfers are prepared to develop loose collections of temporary alliances, referred to as we-groups, for mutually beneficial reasons (Dunning et al., 1988; Elias, 2001b). Not only did interviewees actively seek out and develop 'friendships' with people whom they viewed as similar to themselves, participants also identified the types of people they would try to avoid, to which the focus is now turned.

7.2 We-group behaviours: Moaners and the role of banter

Results from this study indicate that some professional golfers are constrained to engage in a specific type of behaviour which contributes to their acceptance within a particular we-group and thus helps the development of we-group friendship networks. In addition to developing networks with people the players perceived as being similar to themselves, virtually all participants in this study stated that they avoided certain players on tour, commonly referred to as moaners. As Golfer F rather bluntly put it, "surround yourself with positive people ... Avoid the moaners, avoid the idiots ... it definitely

helps”. Similarly Golfer Q explained “don’t spend time with moaners, it will rub off on you”. There was general agreement that so called moaners were likely to make life on tour even more of a chore than it already was. This is further exacerbated by the fact that it is difficult to get away from the relatively small bubble of touring professional golf, or the ‘circus’ as one participant put it, and thus it is reasonably difficult for some players to avoid moaners. In many ways the moaners are, in fact, only voicing the reality of the difficult aspects of life as a professional golfer, which juxtaposes the view often depicted by media accounts of professional sport. Indeed these are the realities which players openly revealed during interviews in this study, however, while on tour many of the same players do not publicly moan and engage, therefore, in something of a show by demonstrating a positive attitude to others. The majority of touring golfers spend large periods of time away from their family and friends with intense travelling schedules competing for relatively small sums of money. And for some golfers pursuing a life on tour does in fact cost them money, an issue which is returned to in chapter eight. It is argued, therefore, that the moaners are only saying what many of their golfing colleagues are in fact thinking. However, while away on tour players engage in a coping mechanism where they outwardly project a positive attitude and seek out people who do the same. Indeed one of the most significant factors in being accepted to a particular we-group is being able to stay positive while on tour, especially in the face of the more difficult aspects of golfers’ lives. Golfer L, a Challenge tour player, explained the perceived importance of travelling with people who project a positive image of themselves when times get tough, “it is very important who you travel with and travelling with guys who when they are playing bad don’t get upset, who are happy, who forget about it [playing

poor] and have a laugh ... is very important". As has been explained earlier, feelings of loneliness and isolation on tour are exaggerated during periods of stress and poor play and, as the quote by Golfer L highlighted, there is a tendency for many golfers to react to such feelings with humour. Similarly, Golfer O, an EPGA tour player, explained that "times on tour can get a bit shitty but you have just got to stay positive and try to have a laugh with the lads". The normative behaviour expressed in the development of we-groups is to demonstrate and prove to others that players have the right attitude and are not a moaner. The reality, it seems, is that often the same players who found it important to avoid moaners, through explaining the realities of their life as a professional golfer during an interview would, if they outwardly commented in the company of other players, be classed as a moaner themselves. However, while away on tour players attempted to keep up a facade, it seems, just to help them get through the tough times. For Elias (2001a), people's self-perception as both an individual and part of a friendship group are linked to different parts of their psyche and change from one scenario to another. As a result, it is argued that people's behaviour also changes, whereby in certain scenarios it is socially accepted that people are able to distinguish themselves, however in others, there are limits to the manner in which people should behave. For example, not behaving in a particular way, such as failing to maintain a positive attitude on tour, would incur disapproval and often strong negative responses from other golfers, despite the fact that as the evidence here suggests, many golfers actually would harbour these negative feelings towards their job.

The basic idea people have of themselves in relation to other people is a fundamental precondition of their ability to deal successfully with others and to communicate with them in the production of we-groups (Elias, 2001a). More specifically, the attitudes and behaviours of how to act, such as engaging in activities including banter, and how not to act, such as moaning about being on tour, facilitate the deepening and consolidation of the normative codes of behaviour for a particular we-group (Elias, 2001a). In some circumstances these normative codes of behaviour which are associated with being accepted as part of a particular we-group can be very strong and encourage people to do things that ordinarily they would not do (Elias, 2001a). For example, in this particular study some of the banter associated with life on tour often involves extreme personal insults between players which, in Golfer O's, opinion, can be "very close to the bone". In other words, at times the 'friends' on tour do not actually behave in a 'friendly' way. There is similar evidence that injured footballers put on a false front in order not to reveal any weaknesses to fellow competitors (Roderick, 2006c). For Roderick (2006c, p.86), this type of banter among players is "commonplace and appears in many cases to be double-edged". In other words, despite being couched in humorous and seemingly harmless terms, jokes tend to contain a more serious meaning – such as implying that the injured player is either lazy or soft. Roderick (2006c) explains this scenario using symbolic interactionism and Goffman's (1959) concept of 'front stage' and 'back stage'. In particular he argues that professional footballers are expected not to complain during times of stress but to laugh along with the banter which sometimes is directed at them (Roderick, 2006c). Furthermore, 'frontstage' workplace humour may assist players in appearing to accept what they perceive as a fearful situation, whilst avoiding looking

weak in front of team mates and maintaining a hard front, 'backstage' however players may in fact be anxious (Roderick, 2003). Similarly, the engagement of professional golfers in extreme forms of banter can be viewed as a way of demonstrating they are in fact coping and not revealing any weaknesses to other players. Furthermore, it could be argued that we-group behaviours can in some cases be very extreme and, even at times, the professional golfers involved actually fail to realise the full extent of their behaviours. As Elias (2001a, p.93) explains, in relation to how people act in we-group formation, it "may throw the strangeness of our own image of ourselves and man [sic] into sharper relief if we see it retrospectively". In addition to the player quotes provided here, a clear example of the culture of banter which exists between players is evident in the Twitter parody account set up anonymously during the 2013 EPGA tour qualifying school, named @QSchoolWanker. This account was used by players to make fun of other players and achieved over 2,500 following accounts during the course of the qualifying school.

Elias (2001a, p.93) explains the importance of language as being an "indispensable means of orientation without which we lose our way, just as we lose the ability to orient ourselves in space if the familiar signposts that determine what we expect to perceive turn out to be unreliable and deceptive". In this study, therefore, it is argued that it is important to analyse the role of behaviours, and particularly language, in we-group formation. Furthermore, facial expressions of being happy are also taken as important in developing we-groups (Elias, 2001b). Indeed, it could be argued that language is important in the development of we-groups through the use of banter by maintaining a happy facade and not being a moaner. This is not, however, to suggest that

professional golfers are always fully aware of changes in their behaviour during the development of these we-groups, from a distance, as it were. People's behaviour is not developed from a purely objective viewpoint with clear reasoning, but rather a person's self-image is viewed "simultaneously in the mirror of self-consciousness in relation to other people" (Elias, 2001a, p.99). In much the same way as the development of 'front stage' and 'back stage' personas, Elias (2001a) refers to a particular form of self-consciousness which often operates below the level of consciousness. This type of behaviour, which is viewed as natural and universally human, is where people do not explicitly think about how they behave or how they are viewed but still act in a particular socially accepted way (Elias, 2001a). The accepted modes of behaviour in professional golf are, therefore, viewed as the result of intended and unintended, or conscious and subconscious, behaviours all enmeshed in the golfing figuration. It is important to stress that there is always a balance between conscious and subconscious behaviours in the development of we-groups (Elias, 2001a). Furthermore, the development of codes of behaviour are considered processual and develop over time. According to Elias (2001a), an individual's image of themselves emerges slowly at first and then gathers pace. When starting out on tour, for example, this thesis has shown that players learn how to be accepted as a professional golfer and, specifically, become increasingly aware of themselves as a person who is able to gain acceptance by virtue of a combination of conscious and subconscious developments, through encounters with other people. Thus, the result is professional golfers develop typical behaviours which they hope will see them become accepted in particular we-groups.

An individual's behaviour is also a result of the interdependent relationships between players, amongst others, at a variety of different levels in the golfing hierarchy. In addition to the more direct encounters they have with other players, this involves observation of behaviours between golfers who, at first glance, appear not to have much in common with one another. For example, interviewees in this study specifically identified the attitudes of other players who play at a different level to themselves. As Golfer F, who has played the majority of his career at Challenge tour level and below, said of a former USPGA tour player who lost his tour card and was therefore required to play in a qualifying event for the US Open, "[he] pitched up with all the guys like me and the other guys out the trunk of their car and qualified. These guys aren't moaning about where they are ... They don't care". The key point here is that there is also a view that more experienced and successful players learn to deal with the vagaries of tour life and project an image of coping when times get tough, which in this specific example required the player in question to drop down and play in less prestigious events. This appears to further develop and consolidate the types of behaviours which are accepted on tour, particularly in reference to lower ranked players with whom they would not ordinarily have much day-to-day connection with. From a figurational viewpoint, all professional golfers live and act in connection with each other, even if this is not the 'direct' connections on a daily basis, which is recognised by the Golfer F quote above. The difference though, is that there are varying degrees of interdependence given the differences in skill level between players. In this regard, Elias (2001a) draws the analogy of looking out on a street from a building with a variety of different floors to represent different levels of interdependence. At street level a person's behaviour is very closely

related, or considered more interdependent, to that of another person. For example, a person may have to physically move out of the way of somebody else walking directly towards them. People on floor five, however, look at the people on the street and develop behaviour based upon what they can see even despite having a smaller degree of interdependence with them than those who are on the 'same level', as it were (Elias, 2001a). This analogy, although somewhat simplified here, proves useful in understanding how players attitudes and normative behaviours stem both from people who they meet within we-groups on a daily basis, but also from others with whom they do not have such direct interaction with – such as golfers higher up the hierarchy – but whose public shows of behaviour they witness as part of their extended we-groups.

To this point, this chapter has sought to explain how golfers attempt to develop friendship networks with other players, and who they avoid, by engaging in specific types of behaviours in order to enhance their own personal lives and survive on tour. More specifically, it is argued that how professional golfers see themselves and act, in that regard, “cannot be understood in isolation from the social situation of those who see themselves in this way” (Elias, 2001, p.97). Elias (2001a) used the concept of ‘self-consciousness’ to help explain how people view themselves and behave in relation to different social groups and argues that the greater variability of relationships forces individuals to repeatedly ask themselves more often: how do we stand in relation to one another? In other words, if a person’s acceptance within a particular we-group is called into question then their personal security may also be threatened. As Elias (2001, p.93) explicitly states, “when what was certain becomes uncertain ... one is like a person

suddenly thrown into the sea, with no sight of dry land”, thus explaining why golfers interviewed for this study found it so important to develop these we-groups. This characteristic is complex sociologically though as whilst players recognise it is important to develop temporary alliances of we-groups for mutually beneficial reasons, virtually all the players interviewed for this study also outlined the personal conflicts that arise in the context of their daily activities while away on tour. These individual versus social conflicts surfaced mostly as a result of a process in which long periods of time were spent together whilst playing a global schedule. This is supported by the primary evidence, such as EPD tour player Golfer M, who explained that he would “go out for a meal and a few drinks [with other players] on the practice day” however also stressed that “you have to remember though you are there to work and number one priority has to be your golf”. Such attitudes inevitably lead to conflict and friction between players who may be considered ‘friends’. The next section, therefore, will seek to explain the changing balance between ‘friends’, ‘acquaintances’, and ‘enemies’.

7.3 Changes in I-/we- balance: Friends, acquaintances, and enemies

According to the players interviewed here, there are many problems associated with navigating relationships with other players on tour. As has been indicated, the majority of golfers, for mutually beneficial reasons, are faced with the issue of demonstrating significant togetherness with others and displaying the attributes of fitting in with particular we-groups, even despite the fact they may have little in common. Elias (2001a) argued that particular layers of we-identity, such as family and friends, carry a special weight and an increased emotional charge that people crave for their physical and social wellbeing. However, these close knit groups are frequently being replaced by non-

permanent and/or partially changeable relations between individuals which, it is argued, is a structural feature of contemporary societies (Elias, 2001a). Furthermore, this has almost certainly been exacerbated with the increasing lengthening of interdependency chains between people, such as those which characterise the nomadic lives of professional golfers who spend less time at home with their close family and friend units and more time with other fellow golfers, many of whom they only have a rather superficial relationship with.

It was clear from the interviewees in this study that choosing a career as a professional golfer led to a number of sacrifices in regard to their close knit home groups. Golfer L explained:

One of the biggest things you give up, and I suppose you do in a lot of professional sports, is your friends ... your best friends and the people you were at college with ... one of the things you miss really.

Similarly Golfer P explained “what I would call my circle of best friends from childhood I see them probably once every three or four months at the moment ... so I wouldn’t say I live a normal life anymore”. Friends at home are increasingly replaced by others on tour who the players see on a more regular basis from one tournament to the next. Professional golfers spend the majority of their time with golfers, caddies, coaches, and other people who travel with the tours and as such their day-to-day experiences are impacted on by individuals in these wider networks. Golfer Q hinted at the influential role of people in the golf figuration when explaining that, as a golfer, “you spend more time with other players than your own family”. For Golfer A, players on tour had actually

replaced the time spent with his family. More specifically, when asked how the work of professional golf affects his 'normal' life, Golfer A explained:

It became my life and it was my world ... I was cocooned, it was my life. So this 9 to 5 and your weekends and you're meeting the lads down the pub or whatever, that was alien to me. My life was this circus travelling around the world ... there were sacrifices ... My circle back home was virtually non-existent ... My family were virtually people on tour who came from all the way round the world. It wasn't like you was coming back to your neighbours or your old school pals who were still there ... you had a new circle of friends.

Tour players are comprised of a variety of different ages, personalities, and nationalities. Many interviewees explained the only thing they had in common with other players was their employment as a professional golfer. It also became clear that, for many players, given a choice, they would not ordinarily be friends with each other but are bound together as result of the unintended outcomes associated with their career. This viewpoint was highlighted by the majority of interviewees who attempted to define what constitutes a 'real friend'.

When asked to explain the nature of relationships between players on tour virtually all interviewees made a distinction between 'real friends' and what was termed 'acquaintances' or 'work colleagues'. This distinction is grasped by Golfer N, an EPGA tour player for 19 years, who said "you do not have too many close friends but lots of 'chums'". Similarly Golfer P neatly explains the difference between friends and acquaintances:

I wouldn't say I had many friends. I know a lot of them now and they are all good guys and you see them in the hotel at night and maybe have dinner with them and play practice rounds with them but I wouldn't say they were my friends.

Interviewees sought to define their relationship with other players by suggesting they were 'friendly' without necessarily being 'friends' and were 'social' without necessarily 'socialising'. With the risk of over simplifying, players generally described their friends as people that they socialised with away from the golf environment and associated this with their 'home life'. Indeed levels of association within we-groups represent different amounts of integration, such as those identified here between families, friends, and acquaintances (Elias, 2001a). For example, in this study other players on tour tended to be considered outside their close knit group of 'real' friends. This suggests that professional golfers are not friends *per-se*, but they are friends of convenience simply to try and help them cope with the rigours of being lonely and away from home. These 'friendships' might not be regarded as real friends because in many ways, such as on the golf course itself during the actual tournament, they are enemies so to speak. Indeed this contradicts the media stereotype that these professional golfers are on tour having fun with their 'mates', when in fact many of these friendships are developed knowing that they are largely superficial. This said, it is also important to recognise that golfers should not be considered a homogenous group in this regard. It would seem from the data identified in this chapter that many golfers find it difficult to develop genuine 'friendships' with other golfers in anything other than a superficial sense, however, others seemingly found developing home-from-home friendship networks easier to make.

Golfer R, a successful former major winner, explained, “I have two lives ... my life on tour then you have your life at home, completely different friends ... the tour guys don’t know your life at home and the people at home don’t know your family on tour”. It became clear from the data revealed in this study that many professional golfers broadly have two lives, one at work and one at home. This is, of course, oversimplified and the intention is not to present golfers’ lives as an either/or scenario but rather there is significant overlap between their home and work lives, as has been discussed extensively in chapter six. However, the key point to stress at this juncture is that golfers’ significant dislocation from their home is an inevitable feature of being on tour, and being away so regularly means that home is a sporadic environment for them. Furthermore, distinctions between what constituted a ‘real friend’ were used to make the wider point that many players were more comfortable in an environment with friends at home than they were with other players on tour. In other words, even despite the popular conception that professional golfers are out on tour and having fun, the reality is such that the way the golfers feel about their ‘acquaintances’ on tour is no different from how many people feel about their colleagues in work more generally. The important point raised here is that even despite appearances, some aspects of the nature of relationships in professional golf are similar to regular jobs. As Golfer K, an EPGA tour player, explained “you’ve got your mates at home who you would do anything with and relax with straight away ... [when on tour] you’re at work basically”. This quote once more serves to juxtapose the populist notions of ‘lads on tour’, ‘holiday’ or ‘dream jobs’ which have been linked with the occupation of professional golf. Furthermore, there was general agreement that if it

was not for the fact they were professional golfers, they would probably not choose to be friends with other players. As Golfer L, for example, said:

You have your friends on tour but if it wasn't for golf they would not be your friends would they? They are like your acquaintances, you socialise with them because you are doing the same thing. Your actual real friends you just don't see.

Similarly, when asked to describe his relationship with other players, Golfer P explained:

You sort of get on because you have got to get on. I mean you're stuck out there mainly with 100 guys, you might be able to go on the phone to your girlfriend for an hour, but apart from that you've got to get on with them. They are mostly good guys, but not really guys I would spend time with at home.

Golfer P draws particular attention to the dislocation experienced by being so far away from home. Rather than being glamorous, the travelling lifestyle of professional golf does in fact make him feel trapped, and thus dislocated, effectively stranded miles from home. It is unlikely he would feel this way if he was not playing tournaments the world over but instead was much closer to home more often. The result, it appears, is that players are very much forced to get on with other players.

The distinction that players drew between friends and acquaintances, where the latter were people on tour who they would not choose as friends but rather are embroiled in the figuration in which professional golfers are inescapably enmeshed, can be explained by leaning on figurational concepts and research. The behaviours of people in loose collections of temporary alliances, which was outlined earlier, must be viewed as fluid and constantly in flux (Murphy et al., 1990). More specifically, it is argued that

group formation of this type is “organised on a relatively loose and ad hoc basis” which would unite and separate as and when required (Murphy et al., 1990, p.143). In other words, conformity to a specific type of behaviour in social groups, such as maintaining a positive attitude while away on tour, goes hand in hand with a degree of flexibility when required. Individuals tend to form temporary ad hoc allegiances according to the needs in a particular time and place and they can quickly change from one situation to another (Dunning, 1999). For example, in the football hooliganism research, Dunning (1999, p.150) describes a scenario whereby groups of people “regularly fought each other but tended to unite if one was challenged by or came into conflict with a group from a neighbouring community”. From this viewpoint, certain groups can in fact join and foster feelings of togetherness with others in order to fight against different groups, however, once the greater threat has reduced they return to being hostile and fighting against each other again. More specifically, it is argued that the individuals involved were able to “take the lid off” for a while and collectively to establish a temporary reversal of the power structure of the wider society” (Murphy et al., 1990, p.143). So effectively, the smaller cliques or groupings form part of a larger more complex group of ‘alliances within alliances’ which characterises the makeup of the overall group (Murphy et al., 1990). Similarly, the allegiances and alliances between professional golfers are equally complex and constantly changing. Golfers are not, of course, physically fighting with each other, however, they are required to form groupings with people many of whom they have little genuine feelings for and are regularly in direct competition with, and therefore people they do not want to see do well because it would affect their own chances of success. This section has argued that although some golfers did make genuine

friends on tour, for most they never felt like anything more than temporary acquaintances borne out of convenience. It is also important to note, too, that ‘friends’ and ‘acquaintances’ are not considered to be closed discrete classifications but are characterised by varying degrees of overlap. Thus, they are more adequately viewed as existing on a continuum where the balance between friends, acquaintances, and also enemies, changes from person to person and from one situation to another. This changing relationship between golfers on tour forms the basis for discussions in the final section of this chapter, which looks specifically at conflicts and tensions that arise between professional golfers.

7.4 ‘Friends as enemies’: Conflicts and tensions on tour

The networks of relationships that players develop over time can be both ‘friends’ and enemies, at the same time. It is argued that the non-permanent and/or partially changeable relations which characterise the emotional ties between people in the golfers’ own particular we-groups may be ambivalent and can often take a “love-hate form” (Elias, 2001a, p.219). For example, efforts to earn increased prize money in golf, which can help with the physical and social security many players on tour crave (which is also, incidentally, part of the reason for the development of friendship groups in the first place), professional golfers must compete against the very people who represent part of their friendship we-groups. As such there is a constant switching of roles (Elias, 2001a). It is the high levels of competitive pressure for the limited number of places in the upper echelons of professional golf, where players will earn the majority of the prize money and achieve qualification for higher tours, which revealed the rivalries and internal

conflicts that exist between players. Magee and Sugden (2002) explain that the foundations of trust in professional football are often undermined by the career mobility inherent to players' careers, which makes it difficult for them to develop respect for the workplace motives of other work colleagues. Also in football, Magee (1998, p.129) examines what is termed a "dressing room culture" where the English game is characterised by a "dog-eat-dog" way of life and to this extent many players "look after themselves". Similarly, the rewards available to professional golfers are in short supply which leads to the development of a number of internal conflicts between players who, on one hand, are required to coexist on tour for mutually beneficial reasons, however, also find themselves in direct competition with each other on a weekly basis. In many ways, this is in more direct conflict with one another, by the very nature of the individual focus of competition in golf, than would be the case in football, for example. With such a self-centred focus, the word 'selfish', unsurprisingly, featured heavily in the responses for the majority of golfers interviewed here. Virtually all participants championed the importance of developing friendship we-networks while, at the same time, maintaining an approach narrowly focused on their personal aims. Interviewees were asked what personal characteristics are required for a successful life on tour. To this end Golfer M replied:

You are there to work and number one priority has to be your golf ... you have to ... realise the only person who wants you to do well out there is yourself ... [and you] have to do what is best for your golf, no one else's.

Similarly, it is worth quoting Golfer L at length regarding the personal characteristics required for a successful career on tour:

I think it [golf] is a very selfish sport and a very individual sport ... Very selfish, yeh very selfish. Be in it for yourself. Don't really care what anybody thinks [or] what anybody else does ... You've got to be very disciplined and not led astray or anything ... find what works for you and do your own thing, don't be a sheep or anything. Don't get led astray by anybody else, don't do what other people do, do your own thing.

It is perhaps unsurprising that players placed a high importance on being selfish given that for many the tour was a means by which they were aiming to provide financial support for themselves and their families.

This type of selfish attitude is evidenced by the numerous interviewees who prioritised their own personal interests. Furthermore, this prioritisation was often at the expense of other players on tour, some of whom they would travel with on a weekly basis and thus formed a central part of their friendship we-group on tour. Perhaps the clearest examples of players prioritising their own needs, which consequently led to internal conflicts, occurred when preparing for a tournament. During the tournament itself there are rules which prohibit offering advice to other players, however, outside of competition there is evidence of players asking for technical guidance from other players. Unsurprisingly, the participants in this study were unlikely to engage in behaviour which may give others a competitive advantage over them. This sentiment was clearly articulated by Golfer D, who has a reputation for being good at putting:

Guys come up to me and they want a lesson on putting ... what advantage to me is me giving you a lesson on putting? To make you a better player? They all want

to know how I putt well ... but I'm not going to give them everything, it's not in my interest to. They're not going to pay me for the lesson. If I said, right, give me a percentage of your winnings this week but they're never going to do that ... at the end of the day I'm not going to give away my advantage, just not a chance.

It is clear from this quote that players are not prepared to share information with so-called 'friends' on tour. Indeed they are, in effect, both friends and enemies at the same time. Similarly, Golfer E explained that during practice rounds in the week running up to the commencement of a tournament players are required to make decisions which may cause friction with others. During practice rounds golfers generally play in groups of two, three, and four which is referred to as a 'two ball', 'three ball', and 'four ball' respectively. Golfer E explained that he preferred to play in a two ball because "four balls often turned into a competition" adding "it [a two ball] would allow more time to practice and work out what needed to be done [for the forthcoming tournament]". However, Golfer E's preference for playing in a two ball often led to conflict with other players if they attempted to join the practice group. He continued:

You could travel with a group of players and they wanted to come and play with you. If they saw your name down in a two ball they would want to join up. But I had to say to them "look I want to play just in a two ball" for whatever reasons ... This would irk some people but ultimately I was there to work.

The examples presented here highlight the types of conflicts which can happen between players who ordinarily are part of the same friendship we-groups network. This is further illustration that friendships between players are borne out of convenience, rather than the 'real thing', so to speak. Conflict and tensions between players on tour was also evident

when individuals discussed periods of time when they were not producing a high level of performance. This is clearly articulated by Golfer B, a Challenge tour player, who draws a comparison between playing top amateur events and the transition to becoming a professional. He stated that as an amateur you could be:

One of the top guys ... You turn up at [amateur] events and everybody looks at you ... whereas you turn professional and nobody cares really ... everybody is trying as hard as they can ... to be honest nobody cares about anybody else in the pro game ... You just get on with it ... You'd be silly to think that people are going to wish you well done and so on.

Furthermore, players would avoid confiding in other players at all costs. Emotional support was something of a closed shop and the general consensus was if players were struggling on and/or off the course then generally their colleagues would be happy they were having a hard time. Referring to talking to other players about tough times as a professional, Golfer D explained that "one thing is no one's going to care. The majority of people that you tell your woes, half of them will be happy and the other half don't care". Similarly, Golfer F stated that when playing poorly players should offer "no excuses because no one's interested. No one cares about you. No one is interested, nobody cares". The result is that players tended to keep their personal problems to themselves, particularly within the golfing fraternity, in order not to give others an advantage and to also guard against being viewed as a moaner. Such attitudes can also serve to increase and reinforce the perceived levels of loneliness that particular players may harbour. As Elias (2001b) argues, feelings of loneliness can be exacerbated when people are in the midst of many others, but has little significance and is a matter of

indifference whether this person actually exists or not. Professional golfers are surrounded by many other people on tour but, when it comes down to it, it appears they do not have any real meaningful feelings for each other.

It became clear that the relationships between professional golfers can ebb and flow on a continuum between friends, acquaintances and enemies at different times and places. Professional golfers exhibit behaviours where they are both ‘friends’ and enemies as they are in direct competition with each other. Similarly, a study on professional boxing indicates that two boxers may in fact be friends outside the ring but each will try to inflict harm on each other during a bout (Weinberg & Around, 1952). More specifically, it is argued that the aggression between boxers during a fight becomes impersonal and after the bout they may be as friendly as competition permits. Furthermore, any injuries inflicted on an opponent during a fight is “rationalised away by an effective trainer or manager in order to prevent an access of intense guilt, which can ruin a fighter” (Weinberg & Around, 1952, p.465). It is argued that the opponent is attempting to do the same thing and that this is ultimately the purpose of boxing: to beat the opponent into submission. Weinberg and Around (1952) describe the culture between professional boxers but fail to develop this further than referring to actual conscious decisions made by the fighters and trainers themselves. However, the golfers in this study indicate behaviour between professional sportspeople can only be understood as the result of a combination of conscious and subconscious actions. Such changes can be explained by drawing on the layers of habitus which influence the formation of we-group friendships (Elias, 2001a).

The development of we-group friendships between professional golfers, who often have little in common with each other and are regularly in direct competition, should not be viewed as something out of the ordinary. A social formation of this type is “both hard and tough, but also flexible and far from immutable. It is, in fact, always in flux” (Elias, 2001a, p.209). In short, results from this study indicate an interdependent relationship between players on tour where, on the one hand, players are constrained to coexist with each other on a daily basis for mutually beneficial reasons, however, on the other hand, they are in direct competition with each other competing for the same prize money. At first glance, such apparently paradoxical camaraderie we- statements, where players show allegiance to a particular group, directly alongside conflict and tension I- statements, where players only concern themselves with their own individual priorities, might appear static in nature. However, this should be viewed as a process which changes from one context to another (Elias, 2001a). This study has revealed that professional golfers develop the normative codes of behaviour expected to be part of a social group while, at the same time, focus on their individual self and compete against each other. This, according to Elias (2001a), is a key part of contemporary society where people’s behaviour is constantly in flux. For example, from an early age people are expected to have a fairly high degree of self-control and personal independence. Elias (2001a, p.144) refers to a scenario, which has been indicated in this study in professional sport, where an individual:

Is accustomed to competing with others; he [sic] learns early on, when something earns him applause and causes him pride, that is desirable, that is desirable to

distinguish oneself from others by personal qualities, efforts and achievements; and he learns to find satisfaction in success of this kind.

But, at the same time, how people behave in such societies leads to limits on the manner in which one can distinguish themselves. Outside these limits the exact opposite is expected (Elias, 2001a). Therefore, one person is not expected to stand out from others and to do so would be to incur disapproval and often much stronger negative responses (Elias, 2001a). The individual's self-control is therefore directed at not stepping out of line, at being like everyone else, and not moaning. Striking the right balance between individualism and conformity is always difficult and this is something professional golfers must learn to manage. As we have seen, in one form or another, an attempt to strike this balance brings about numerous tensions and difficulties. These tensions are bound up by the peculiar norms of behaviour within the particular social group, such as fallouts between players. According to Elias (2001a), people try to overcome the perceived contradiction between individual I- and group we-, or as an isolated individual at the same time as involvement in a friendship group, by a process of 'encapsulation'. This is where people's self-perception as both an individual and a representative part of a friendship group are assigned to different compartments of their knowledge, and these compartments communicate only very tenuously with each other. The traits of a group identity are, therefore, viewed as a "layer of the social habitus built very deeply and firmly into the personality structure of the individual" (Elias, 2001a, p.209). At the same time, it is important to highlight that, from a figurational perspective, such levels are not conceptualised as a crude segmental–nonsegmental dichotomy (Elias, 2001a). Rather, it is argued that there are various degrees of alliances ranging from tightly knit friendship

groups, which do exist in golf, through to fluid, open and impersonal forms of bonding. These layers of friendship groups can overlap and interact with others in a variety of complex ways and exhibit a wide spectrum of ‘we-’ and ‘I-’ group feelings and bonds correspondingly (Dunning, 1999).

7.5 Conclusion

The central objective of this chapter was to analyse the relationships between touring professional golfers across the three tiers of the EPGA tour. A more detached, figurational analysis has highlighted a workplace culture whereby players begin to adopt, both consciously and subconsciously, the mannerisms, attitudes and behaviours which foster the development of networks of temporary we- group alliances. The touring nature of professional golf, which is increasingly global, constrains golfers to approach their daily lives in a particular way even if they do not recognise such constraints. More specifically, it is argued that professional golfers are constrained to develop we-groups for survival on a tour and, specifically, for ‘social’ reasons – to help reduce feelings of loneliness, isolation, and homesickness – and for logistical reasons – to reduce the costs of travel. The urge to develop friendship networks constrains players to behave in a manner that is expected by them rather than in a way which reflects their actual emotions. Furthermore, there are considerable pressures on players to maintain a positive attitude, and avoid moaners, even in the face of poor performances and long periods of time away from their friends and families. While away on tour interviewees surrounded themselves on a daily basis with people who shared the same hopes and dreams and thus found it difficult to view their social world in a more detached and reality-congruent way.

Aspiring sportspeople are often overly involved and may therefore fail to view the reality of their situation in a detached manner given the emotions and competing information from others in their friendship network.

A closer examination of the figurations players are a part of, and the characteristics of friendship networks, has highlighted that players are both friends and enemies at the same time. A complex relationship exists where the terms ‘friends’ and ‘enemies’ should not be viewed as two separate entities but rather both sides of the same coin. In other words, the relationships between players in friendship networks were characterised by bonds of togetherness and association with particular we-groups while, at the same, showing evidence of tensions and conflict between the same players as they are ultimately in direct competition with each other for a share of the overall prize money. It is argued that the lives of professional golfers should not be viewed in isolation, but rather players viewed as *homines aperti* such that they are enmeshed in a network of interdependencies which contour their experiences on tour (Elias, 1978). The high level of individualisation and loneliness, which is a central feature of the work of professional golf, does not harmonise very well with the complex network of interdependence that characterises the we-groups in which golfers are enmeshed, largely as a result of their own socially inculcated needs for survival on tour. This changing balance of independence and dependence, which includes the requirement for golfers to be on their own and focus on their own individual priorities, on the one hand, and, on the other, the impossibility of deciding for oneself and conformity to particular we-groups, can produce considerable tensions. The desire to be a professional golfer and compete

independently in their own right goes hand in hand with the wish to stand wholly within particular social we-groupings. This section has attempted to show that the uncertainties and competitive pressures associated with touring professional golf is of sociological importance for understanding the relationships between players on tour. As highlighted, the financial rewards available to the most successful players is a significant factor in the conflicts and tensions which arise between players. Indeed this thesis now turns to a more detailed analysis of pay and conditions in professional golf.

Chapter 8

Professional Golf: A License to Spend Money?

Issues of Money in the Lives of Touring Professional Golfers

Chapter seven revealed the conflicts and tensions which arise between players on tour, some of which develop given that golfers are ultimately in direct competition with each other for a share of the overall prize money. This is further intensified by the fact that the financial rewards available from a successful career in professional golf are very large. Tiger Woods, for example, turned professional in 1996 and by the end of his first year his on-course earnings and off-course sponsorship were estimated at over \$26 million (Farrell et al., 2000). However, despite such large rewards for top golfers and some other professional sportspeople, the reality is such that the vast majority fare comparatively poorly (Frank & Cook, 2010; Murphy & Waddington, 2007; Szymanski & Kuypers, 1999; Wacquant, 2011). The central objective of this chapter, therefore, is to examine issues of money in the lives of professional golfers across the three tiers of the EPGA tour. This will include a focus on the ways and extent to which issues of money shape the lives of the majority of players and the increasingly complex networks of relationships which accompany this. In doing so, the aim is to more adequately express the extent to which money has impacted on the development of relationships in the working lives of professional golfers. This begins with an analysis of the prize money breakdown versus practical costs of playing on tour.

8.1 The ‘reality’ of money in professional golf: The fluctuating dynamics of prize money breakdown versus practical costs of playing on tour

Firstly, in order to frame an argument primarily concerned with the social outcomes engendered by the economic forces dominating elite sport, it is necessary to briefly contextualise the amount of prize money available on the EPGA tour. Indeed there has been a significant increase in prize money available which is evidenced by the EPGA tour order of merit winners. When the Professional Golfers Association (PGA) organised the first EPGA tour season in 1971 the leading player, England’s Peter Oosterhuis, earned, in real value, £130,904⁷ (£10,384). In 1984, when the tour became independent of the PGA, Bernhard Langer was top of the order of merit with £427,408 (£156,077). 10 years later in 1994 Colin Montgomery was the year’s largest earner with £1,414,103 (£852,222). By 2004 this amount was approximately three times higher when Ernie Els won £4,484,594 (£3,248,954), and in the 2014 season Rory McIlroy had already won £4,099,247 with 11 events on the schedule still remaining (EPGA, 2014c). For the very best players there are also large sums of money available in terms of sponsorship and appearance fees. At EPGA tournaments the organisers offer player lounges with free food and drink all day, in addition to gifts including consumer durables, tickets for professional sporting events, and in some cases chartered shopping trips for players’ wives. Given the wealth and glamour associated with the elite professional game it is not surprising that many young golfers aspire to play golf for their living. With that in mind, this chapter seeks to provide a more realistic analysis of the financial aspects of the lives of professional golfers as their careers move across all three tiers of the EPGA tour and

⁷All figures in the examples presented here have been adjusted in line with inflation data to 2014. The original amounts have been included in brackets.

beyond, and the increasingly complex networks of relationships, constraints and decisions which accompany this.

Most professional golf events last four days in total and after the first two days there is a halfway ‘cut’. The cut is generally the top 65 plus ties, out of a maximum field of 157⁸. If a player makes the cut they will compete for a sliding scale of prize money that increases exponentially the higher they finish. In contrast to sports like football, where a player will still earn a basic wage even if they do not play a particular game, if a golfer does not make the cut they earn zero prize money for that event. There are a number of different outcomes regarding monetary rewards for players competing in a tournament. Some find themselves in a position where they pay their own money to travel and stay at a venue, and if they do not make the cut they will lose money. However, if the player makes the cut, dependent on their position in the field, they may earn enough to cover expenses through to potentially winning very large sums of money. Given the variety of different outcomes perhaps unsurprisingly there was near universal acceptance among all players interviewed that making the cut is a key milestone in the week of a professional golfer. As Golfer A, an EPGA tour player for 16 years, explained “making the cut is always a big thing on regular tour events, my main goal is firstly to make the cut which will then let you try and make your pay cheque”. Similarly, Golfer O, an EPGA tour player, said “that putt to make the cut can be difficult ... a putt to make sure you can earn some money during the weekend”. Whether a player makes any profit

⁸The maximum field size reduces dependent upon time of year and amount of daylight and can be as low as 132.

over a season depends largely upon their ability to earn more in prize money than they outlay in travel expenses.

Extensive travel remains a crucial aspect of any professional golfer's career. Arguably, it is the cost of travel that is the largest outlay for the vast majority and the cost of travelling to events on the EPGA tour has become increasingly expensive over the period of time in which many of the participants in this study have been involved. An aspect of the professional golfer's life largely out of their hands is the location of EPGA tournaments. In 1992, six of a total 41 tournaments were staged outside Europe and by 2002 this was 16 from 41. In 2014 more than half of the tour itinerary is staged outside of Europe, and includes events in the USA, South Africa, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Malaysia, China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Russia, and Australia (EPGA, 2014b). The remaining events that are staged within Europe still incur significant travel expenses. As briefly explained in the contextualisation chapter, a professional based in England, for instance, would be required to travel overseas for the majority of the tour. There were only six events on the 2014 schedule staged in England, Scotland, or Wales, and two of these were not open to regular EPGA tour players unless they specifically qualified. Reflecting on an increasingly global schedule of events, Golfer C, a long-term EPGA tour player, said "be aware of all the downfalls of travelling, it's very different now [compared to when I first started on tour] ... the life of a tour pro is a tough one. Underestimatedly [sic] tough". This chapter will address some of what Golfer C described as 'downfalls' of travelling by specifically analysing pay and conditions in professional golf. Given the amount of prize-money required simply to cover travelling

expenses, it is, perhaps, unsurprising that a central concern for the participants in this study was the level they had to reach in order to make a living out of the game.

8.2 Making a living as a touring professional golfer

The general consensus amongst interviewees was that players who automatically retain their card on the EPGA tour would make a significant profit. This is achieved by finishing within the top 115 on the order of merit at the end of the season. For example, the player ranked 115th at the end of the 2013 season earned £176,743. As the players interviewed for this study identified typical annual expenses of between £60,000 and £100,000 on travel, accommodation, caddy fees, management fees, tax and other associated costs, this would suggest that a player finishing within the top 115 was likely to be making a significant profit. This ‘profit’ would only account for one season, however, and a player would need to produce a level of consistency over a number of years to make a comfortable living from golf. As Golfer J, who has played on the EPGA tour for the last five years, explained: “If you stay on tour for a few years you can do very well for yourself ... It’s a good life ... there are times where your bank account is just rolling away”. However, he also acknowledged that “it’s tough at times and you’re going to have peaks and troughs. There are times when it’s a bit shitty and a bit of a grind”. As this quote suggests then, professional golfers on the EPGA tour can earn large sums of money, however, this financial potential does not represent a linear progression and instead develops in an unplanned or disorderly manner, unevenly distributed from the start. The uneven earning potential in golf is similar to boxing (Wacquant, 2007) and football (Roderick, 2006a) and differs to many ‘mainstream’ occupations (Roderick,

2013). This said, the participants in this study considered that maintaining their card on the EPGA tour is a key milestone that enables them to compete for the larger purses. However, only 115 players can maintain their tour card status in any one year and in 2013 there were over 300 players who played on the EPGA tour and hundreds more playing its second and third tiers, and thousands more playing on local satellite tours. Roderick (2013) argues that in professional football elite level players have been able to secure themselves financially, however, below the very top level players are subject to numerous employment and material uncertainties. A similarly more detached critical observation in professional golf indicates that the monetary rewards available are by no means disseminated very far down the golf hierarchy. The reality is that many individuals are playing at a loss in pursuit of the ‘dream’; that is, just qualifying for the EPGA tour, let alone winning tournaments on it. Golfer K, who has played EPGA and Challenge tour golf for 12 years stated, “for every Monty, Ernie or Poulter there are 100 other players who are risking everything to live the dream on the European Tour. They don’t have six figure bank accounts and huge sponsorship deals. They don’t fly in private jets and drive round in Ferraris”. Professional golfers, therefore, cannot be viewed as a homogenous group as many players may be struggling financially and yet they still have to ply their trade in an environment that requires considerable outlay.

The EPGA tour’s second tier, the Challenge tour, has also become increasingly global. Whereas in 2002 only two events were held outside the European Union, by the 2013 season events were staged in China, India, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Oman, and United Arab Emirates. However, the prize money is much lower than on the main tour. This

means travel expenses are comparable, however, the rewards on offer are only a fraction of those available on the EPGA tour. Golfer F, who plays on Challenge tour, explained how much a typical season would cost:

It's hard for me to talk about golf without talking about money. It has to have an impact. If you look at how much it costs to play 20 events on Challenge tour I reckon that's a conservative, on your own, and sharing your room, with no single rooms, a conservative £30,000 to play Challenge tour. That's the cheapest you could do it – although you could always be cheaper if you stay in your car! ... If you need a £15,000 salary to survive, which you can get flipping burgers at McDonald's, then you need to earn £45,000 to break even. But you get taxed at source on anything up to 20%, or 40% in some countries. You now need to earn £60,000 to get the money you need to survive. And that's not a holiday, it's barely a haircut.

To put this in context, players earning £60,000 or more at the end of the 2013 Challenge tour season had to finish in the top 20 on the rankings list. There were 220 players on the order of merit and around 400 members in total (EPGA, 2014d). Given the top-down nature of prize breakdown in professional golf players must finish in the top 25 to make a return on their investments. Golfer D, who has experience playing a cross section of tours below EPGA tour, when asked about the Challenge tour said:

Unless you're winning or in the top five or perhaps top 10 every week you're not really making a huge amount of money. Almost definitely there are some people which it has cost them money. I would say that more than half the players who are playing, it has cost them money.

This quote highlights that the differential economic power relations are characterised by players' relative positions on tour. Golfer D goes as far as to say that for some players, plying their trade on the golf tour has put them in a position where they have less financial power given that playing has cost them significant sums of money. Furthermore, it could be argued that because of the initial expense required to pursue a career in professional sport and particularly, although not exclusively, those sports which require significant amounts of travel, such as tennis and athletics, if players are outside the top echelons then it may in fact cost them money.

The third tier of professional golf based in the UK and Ireland is the EuroPro tour. EuroPro tour events last three rounds in total, not four, but also have a cut after round two. Prize money is awarded exponentially to players who make the cut and is even more top-heavy than both EPGA and Challenge tours meaning that the power relations between EuroPro tour players are contoured by a different set of economic constraints. For example, players on the EuroPro tour can make the cut and still not earn enough prize money to cover their tournament entry fee alone. As Golfer B, who is currently playing on the EuroPro tour, explained:

The money is very top-heavy. This year I've played five events and made the cut in all of them ... There is nothing for consistency really. You've got to get in there and contend. If we are paying £275 to enter we should at least get that back if you make the cut. But you don't, you've got to finish thirtieth or thirty-fifth to get that back. Which I think is a bit unfair because guys can go broke pretty

quickly by playing decent and making cuts. A lot of guys have had to quit and start working [in a job outside of golf] because they couldn't afford it.

Similarly, Golfer G, who has experience of Challenge and EuroPro tour candidly admitted that "the level which I am at you are always scraping the barrel". As the EuroPro tour is based in the UK and Ireland it means travel expenses for the participants are significantly less than if they were competing on the Challenge tour, however, prize funds are also commensurately lower. The EuroPro tour order of merit winner at the end of the 2013 season earned £33,495 with typical expenses for playing a full schedule of events in the region of £10,000 (EuroPro tour, 2014). It seems that those responsible for running the EuroPro tour consider a top-heavy first prize as being important in order to secure television coverage, and the associated sponsorship this generates. An unintended outcome of this approach is that it favours a style of golf which deviates from that seemingly required on the EPGA tour. As was explained above, consistency of play and making the cut is considered a key part of the EPGA tour golfers' workplace experiences, however, EuroPro tour interviewees argued winning one or two events and missing cuts for the remainder of the season was a better approach than consistently making cuts all season. The general consensus is that EuroPro tour players opted for an 'aggressive' approach, as Golfer B said, "you've got to go for it". Given one of the aims of the EuroPro tour is to equip players for higher level tours it would appear this approach is not conducive to preparation for the higher tier and thus the approaches to their working life as a professional golfer must change depending on the level of tour. This example neatly highlights the complexity of the golfing figuration and the failure of any party to have direct control in regards to the overall outcome. In other words, the prize money

breakdown on the EuroPro tour – despite the fact that it is supposed to be a developmental tour that aims to provide a route to higher level tours – actually fosters a style of play which differs from that required on the higher tours for where the players are meant to be preparing. This chapter now turns to address the habitus of professional golfers in more detail.

8.3 A golfer's habitus: Gambling on the big break

Through the network of relationships individuals find themselves inevitably involved in, they develop, consciously and subconsciously, internalised constraints relating to behaviour. This is referred to as an individual's 'habitus' and such a concept proves useful to examine how golfers make sense of their workplace experiences in relation to the economic pressures, decisions, and constraints outlined earlier in this chapter. For example, many golfers exhibited what some interviewees specifically referred to as a gambling attitude. As Golfer F stated:

I think professional golfers need a certain gambling mentality because it's effectively what you're doing. You're risking your expenses for the week on your golf game. And if you're prepared to deal with that, and the consequences of that, then you'll be better off. If you're a 'fly by the seats of your pants' type person, it helps. If you're a safe planner, I think you might struggle.

Players on the EPGA tour are potentially competing for significant amounts of money each week compared to the less prestigious tours. However, players on the Challenge tour, for example, are often constrained to outlay money to play in events worldwide in the hope that they will earn enough to sustain themselves on tour. Golfer G, who has

experience of Challenge and EuroPro tour, explained: “At my level you are gambling a little bit with your game. You’re paying money to go out to wherever, places like Dubai or America, on the chance you’re going to earn more money back”. Many of the players in this study, it seems, found themselves in something of a double bind. That is, on the one hand some of the participants considered that they needed to be as structured as possible, because this helped with their overall costs when trying to plan tournaments to enter, but on the other hand there was a feeling that some golfers needed to be prepared to gamble as their ‘big breakthrough’ might be just around the corner or moments away. As such, players were willing to gamble by paying to cover their expenses in the hope that they would play well enough to recoup their outlay. No single player has full control over the outcome of a golf tournament, even despite such lengths of planning, and this is another dimension of the golfers’ working lives that was largely outside their control.

In the same way as there is an addictive element to gambling in general (Aasvad, 2003; Cosgrave, 2010; Dunning & Waddington, 2003), there appears to be an addictive element to playing golf on tour. A golfer can spend large sums of money playing in events worldwide but they still have the opportunity to make a profit if they finish high in just one event. Given the top-heavy nature of the prize breakdown a win would likely cover all expenses and leave a significant amount of profit – as such, it proved an enticing scenario for the players within this study to keep returning despite evident worries about money. Alternatively, consistently missing cuts leads to even more expense building up. The typical habitus of interviewees from this study was contoured by the belief that a win will come soon and this made it difficult for players to disengage from

the professional game and many targeted events on a tour where they had little chance of achieving a return on their financial outlay. A golfer's habitus has developed from their own experiences, deeply rooted attachments, motivations and aspirations from wanting to be a professional golfer. In other words, for many professional golfers, they are so deeply bound up within the golf figuration, because being on tour so regularly keeps them away from day-to-day contact with people outside this golf figuration, that players are surrounded by other people so equally involved they cannot shake the often unrealistic notion that their 'big break' will happen soon. As such, even despite the evidence they see on a daily basis of their own financial and personal struggles, and those of most of their fellow golfers, many professionals inevitably struggle to view their social world in a more object-adequate, more detached way (Elias, 1987). Similarly, golfers interviewed here cited the typical family pressures which contributed to pursuing life on tour, which directly relate to their 'gambling mentality' habitus. As Golfer F explained:

The better you are the easier it is ... you can justify why you're doing it because you've bought the house ... you can provide for the family ... If you've played well enough to buy the house then you provide stability for your family ... if you have a bad patch and you start to get some grief [from your partner] you can say "the good times were alright we've bought a house".

This quote by Golfer F indicates how some players come to justify the costs of playing on tour, and the feelings of loneliness and isolation given time spent away from their families for that matter, with the opportunity that professional golf may offer financial security and an improved life for their families in the future. Some of the players interviewed had indeed earned large sums of money in golf and were able to offer

financial security to their families. Although clearly this does not guarantee happiness as a family unit, as the very public accounts of Tiger Woods' infidelity have shown (Sanderson & Clavio, 2010), there was still a view amongst interviewees that the financial rewards available for top players can help to reduce the impacts of a travelling schedule. However this said, as has been indicated in chapter six, the reality is such that even Golfers R, S, and T, two of whom had won major championships and all were very well off financially, stated that they still found professional golf placed a strain on the family even despite being financially secure. In addition to family issues, the golfers' habitus is further developed by the media who focus almost solely on the financial rewards achieved by elite level sportspeople at the top of their relative sport and the potential longevity of a career in professional golf.

Given the difficult financial situation in which players often find themselves, it might be considered surprising to find that interviewees emphasised what they perceived as the value of staying in professional golf given the rewards that are possible should they succeed in the future. Reinforcing the gambling ideal inherent to the golfing habitus, the players here generally considered golf to be their most likely route to financial security – despite the recognition that it was also very difficult to achieve this. As Golfer B clearly stated:

On the main tour people are made, you see these guys and it's unbelievable. The rewards which are out there are massive but on these mini-tours you're broke really. So now money wise for me it's get whatever cash you can to scrape through, and sometimes you're on real fine margins but it's got to be done ... You

have got to give yourself the chance, I know I'm good enough. There are a few players at this club [referring to the club where the player has an attachment to] which wish they would have give [sic] it a few years because now they regret it ... Who knows what could have happened?

Therefore, even despite the overwhelming odds against making a living from professional tournament golf, while the players within this study were still playing they believed they had the opportunity to eventually compete at the highest levels and enjoy the rewards that this would bring. Virtually all respondents believed they had more to give in the game and would one day compete at the highest levels. As Golfer F explained:

I've been through financial ruin as a result of my commitment to continuing to play. And how I was, and still am, unwilling to give up my dream. And it's cost me my marriage as well. So, that's the price that I've paid to continue playing golf. But, when I was 10 years old at school I was looking out of the window daydreaming about having an opportunity to play ... I'm not prepared to give up on it yet. I wouldn't change it for anything, I really wouldn't. It's upsetting that it led to, in fact drastically led to, the breakdown of my marriage... But, would I do it all again? Yes! I'd always planned to be a golfer or die in the process.

Interviewees enthusiastically championed professional golf as a career route despite the difficulties involved and the fact that only a small percentage would succeed in making a living out of the game. If these comments are evaluated from a figurational standpoint it is clear that these attitudes stem from their habitus, that is their deeply rooted attachments, motivations and aspirations, which lead to internalised constraints from wanting to be a professional golfer. As discussed above, while away on tour interviewees

surround themselves on a daily basis with people who share the same hopes and dreams and thus find it difficult to view their social world in a more detached and reality-congruent way. The extensive amount of media focus on the glamour and money associated with top level elite sport is only likely to further encourage and strengthen the golfer's habitus and reduces their ability to make sense of their social world in a more detached way. Virtually all participants commented that they aspired to be professional golfers from a very young age and many knew nothing different. Furthermore, despite the vicissitudes of a career on tour, all were willingly continuing to aspire to dream that their game would come good, either again or for the first time, and this would 'make them'.

8.4 The enabling and constraining roles of a sponsor

Given the financial outlay required to play on tour, finding a sponsor can have a significant impact. Some sponsors provide money or other kinds of support (such as travel services) to players and in return usually require endorsement of their particular products or services. This may include, for example, playing with a particular brand of golf clubs or endorsing golf tourism destinations. Other players were, in effect, 'sponsored' by family and friends prepared to back them financially so they can pursue a life on tour. Sponsorship deals, therefore, are by their very nature complex, varied, and constantly in flux. However, there was overwhelming agreement from the participants in this study that in the first instance a sponsor can relieve some of the financial pressures of playing professional golf. As Golfer N stated, "a sponsor gave you a start in the year financially". At the same time, players cited numerous differential pressures and potential problems of working with a complex network of sponsors. There was a strong feeling

among interviewees that their work in golf was becoming driven increasingly by the need to source a network of sponsors in order to secure funding. For some players they would simply not be able to play without a sponsor. The player-sponsor relationship should be viewed as a process with a variety of levels ranging from no sponsorship to potentially large sums and this balance changes over time. For example, at first players strived for enough sponsorship to cover the expense of travel so any prize money earned beyond this went directly to the player themselves. A former EPGA tour winner, Golfer C, identified the key role of a sponsor, “at the time when I started I had a good sponsor so I could play virtually anywhere. The sponsor made it very different and took the pressure off”. Similarly, Golfer E, an EPGA main tour player and former Challenge tour winner stated:

A sponsor is a very important and integral part of having a life on tour. I was lucky that I did well in tournaments in my early days and my name got recognised and I picked up a sponsor. This helped relieve some of the pressure. Although I did not rely solely on the money from the sponsor and put some of it away I would always have enough money to play for a year should the sponsor pull out. I used to win money and put it away and not totally rely on a sponsor, but it was certainly a cushion. Some may find it difficult as it's becoming increasingly hard to find a sponsor in tough economic times.

Relationships with sponsors might be viewed as both enabling and constraining. Sponsors enable players to travel and compete in golf tournaments, however, often they require significant commitments in return. In this dynamic power relationship the higher ranked players often have the most lenient sponsorship deals while the lower players are

more constrained to adhere to stricter contractual arrangements. Over time this power dynamic is not static and rather ebbs and flows and this further reinforces the need to appreciate that professional golfers cannot be seen as a homogenous group or viewed statically. There is a clear process whereby all professional golfers are required increasingly to work within more complex and lengthening networks of relationships that incorporate a range of different sponsors, reflecting the growing complexity of these networks, and particularly the increasing demands of sponsors for players to fulfil their contractual obligations. For some in the sample there is evidence of a commodification of players, who had sold shares in themselves where the investors would receive a return of profits at the end of the season in the form of a dividend. For example, Golfer P explained a share system which he offered to:

Members at the club, people I just know from along the way, friends, family, and if they want a share they have bought into me ... they receive a dividend ... a typical share is £300 for one year and twenty per cent of all prize money goes back into the pot and is split between [the shareholders] ... say I've sold 50 shares and somebody has got one they would get one fiftieth of the total prize money.

However, this commodification of golfers should not to be viewed as a relationship in which the golfer is controlled by the investors but rather results from this study suggest a two-way process in which the player is enabled to compete on tour given the funds raised and the investors received a split of the prize money. The top-heavy nature of prize breakdown in professional golf means potential returns on such an investment are, for the majority of players, relatively small. As Golfer P went on to explain, "last year they [the investors] got their money back but no more" and added that in practice investors "don't

really take their dividend because they're not in it for the money". It would appear that the network of family and friends involved in this type of investment, in contrast to the more commercial sponsorship deals, are motivated not by financial gain but rather in support of the player.

Given that all golfers require clubs to play the game an equipment sponsor in particular was considered potentially important. The golfer-sponsor relationship changes over time and stages of their careers. For example, given their greater degree of power in the golf hierarchy, top ranked EPGA players have more choice regarding equipment and often get paid very large sums of money to use it. However, lower down the golf hierarchy a player has a more complex relationship with their sponsor. Golfer B specifically referred to playing on Challenge tour as a "make or break moment ... because if you're on challenge tour and you don't 'make it' you will start losing money" adding that "the only bonus is if you have a decent card you can get some sponsorship. Whereas on the EuroPro it's so tough, if you ask for sponsorship they say 'well I can give it to people on [main or Challenge] tour really'". Similarly, Golfer F, who has experience playing at different levels, said that on "EuroPro [tour] there are few people that would offer you sponsorship", however, he continued to add that over time, if moving up through the tiers, players begin to attract more sponsorship opportunities. More specifically, Golfer F explained that when moving towards the higher tiers:

Guys are getting stuff thrown at them. How hard is it to not change your driver when you've got the latest and greatest for free and paid to use it sometimes? How hard is it to say no? [A fellow Challenge tour player] said last week he'd just

changed back to his old putter. Nike were paying him a modest amount, they were paying him \$700 dollars a week to play a Nike putter. He said “how can I turn that down?” But he realised that after a few missed cuts that \$700 was a drop in the ocean compared to the putts he would hole with his old putter that will earn him five times that amount in the year if he plays well with it.

This comment highlights both the enabling and constraining elements of the relationship between golfers and sponsors. An equipment sponsor can enable a player to pursue a life on tour by contributing towards associated expenses while, at the same time, constraining players to play a particular brand and type of club that may not necessarily be the equipment they would otherwise choose for themselves. Equipment sponsors stipulate that players are required to use a set number, or in some cases all, of their products. However, the reality is that very few players would choose to use a full set of the same brand of club at any one time and would prefer the freedom to change certain clubs from one brand to another. Furthermore, some equipment manufacturers offer substantially more financial recompense than others but with tighter contractual arrangements. The result is that players often find themselves in a position where they are constrained to make a decision between receiving regular money through equipment sponsorship and the impact this may have on their performances when using the same brand of clubs. In this respect, Golfer F again highlighted that despite the fact that it might be difficult for most players to turn down the money offered:

It’s a bit of a false economy if it’s not the right stuff for you ... the touring fraternity earn the majority of their income with the tools of the trade. They’re never going to get paid enough to justify missing putts with a putter they get paid

to use as opposed to holing putts with a putter they use for free. They are never going to pay you enough to warrant that. And there's a knock on effect of losing your card and the confidence and everything else. When starting out on tour don't change anything but your underpants!

Similarly, an EPGA main tour player, Golfer E, highlighted that equipment manufacturers can be a "help and hindrance at the same time" because players can find themselves being able to use the latest equipment for 'free' as soon as it comes out, but this may not actually be a good thing. As Golfer E continued, players could end up "using a club with the latest shaft in but then miss the cut and think why did I bother changing around with everything as now its cost me money". Furthermore, some players are contractually required to use the latest equipment by their brand sponsor. Given the frequent introduction of new golf equipment professional golfers are therefore regularly required to contend with issues which arise from changes in the golfer-sponsor relationship.

In summary, the figurations in which players and equipment sponsors are enmeshed can be seen to have both constraining and enabling elements. They can enable a player to pursue life on tour by contributing towards associated expenses while, at the same time, constraining players to play a particular brand and type of club that may not necessarily be the equipment they would choose given a free-hand. The very complexity and dynamic nature of the player-sponsor relations, such as the introduction of new golf equipment from sponsors, gives rise to outcomes that nobody has chosen and nobody has designed. It is the growing complexity of the networks golf professionals are a part of

which may, in fact, have the unintended outcome of undermining a player's success on tour as they are set with the question of whether to use a particular brand or not.

8.5 Conclusion

The central objective of this chapter has been to examine how money has impacted on the development of relationships in the working lives of professional golfers across the three tiers of the EPGA tour. It is argued that golfers in the higher echelons of the professional game are receiving more money than ever before, both in terms of prize money and available endorsements. This group is often focussed on by the media, however a more detached, figurational analysis shows that these rewards are available to relatively small numbers of people and the vast majority fare comparatively poorly. As Golfer M stated, it seems for many that professional golf is actually a “loss making business”. It also appears this divide is widening and prize money between the higher and lower golf tours is becoming increasingly polarised. Given the millionaire stereotype often associated with professional golf, and elite-level sport more generally, it is unsurprising that increasing numbers of people aspire to play professionally. A more reality-congruent view, however, reveals that only a very small number of players are able to make a very comfortable living from playing golf and even the majority of players who make it to the level of playing ‘on tour’ will face financial difficulties when pursuing their goals. It is argued that given the initial expense required to pursue a career in professional sport and, particularly, although not exclusively, in those sports which require increased levels of travel such as tennis and athletics, if players are outside the top echelons then it may in fact cost them significant amounts of money. Furthermore, it is

argued that those who are required to make significant investments in their future, particularly if that is to fulfil their childhood dreams, that this may blur their thinking in regard to seeing the reality of their situation, particularly where money is involved.

This chapter has also sought to explain the ways and extent to which issues of money shape the lives of the majority of golf professionals and the increasingly complex networks of relationships which accompany this. A closer examination of the figurations players are a part of, and the characteristics of these dynamic power relationships, has indicated that while the costs of playing on an increasingly global tour schedule have constrained players to develop networks with sponsors for financial reasons they have also, at the same time, in some cases, made it more difficult for players to achieve their goal of playing better golf. The golfers in this study playing most of their golf below the EPGA tour level were faced with an often conflicting choice between regular money from equipment sponsors, and adhering to the restrictive contractual agreements which accompany them, or the freedom to choose and play with a variety of different brand clubs. The associated impact on a player's game is neither intended nor desired by the sponsors themselves and indicative of unplanned outcomes which are the result of the inability of any one group to retain control over the golfing figuration. Such unplanned outcomes are not unusual aspects of social interaction generally, but rather the result of complex processes involving the interweaving of actions of large numbers of people, such as sponsors, who frequently pursue their own interests that may or may not coincide with the interests of the player themselves. The objective of the following chapter is to

draw together all of the discussion sections and offer some conclusions on the life of a professional golfer.

Chapter 9

Conclusion

9.1 Overview of the study

Before the main conclusions can be drawn from the research presented here, it is necessary to provide a brief overview of the study. Chapter two examined the existing literature relating to sports migration, much of which maintains a focus on routes and pathways of athletic talent rather than on the effects of movement on professional sportspeople themselves. On the occasions when migration research does draw conclusions pertaining to athletes' lives it tends to be heavily theorised and offers little empirical evidence to support such notions. Furthermore, the empirically based studies that have been conducted, although useful, do not maintain a focus on occupations with constant workplace circulation. The lives of professional golfers, therefore, was used as a case study to fill this void in the academic literature, and analysed from a figurational viewpoint. To this end, chapter three provided an outline of several sensitising concepts that underpin figurational sociology, namely figurations and interdependence, unplanned processes, power relations, and habitus. It is argued that these concepts help to view golfers' lives with particular emphasis on how people are enabled and constrained by the figurations in which they are inescapably enmeshed. The objective of chapter four was to outline the ways in which the figurational framework in general, and some specific theoretical concepts in particular, guided decisions made in relation to methodology. This chapter detailed the research design, research methods, sampling strategy, and data analysis. By developing an insight into the social world of professional golf, semi-

structured interviews helped ensure the research was directed within the broader social context and stayed focussed on the changing network of relationships. Specifically, Players with experience of competing on one of the levels of EPGA tours were recruited for this study, in addition to a select group of higher ranked players who had the ability to pick and choose which tour to play on but still had experience of travelling within the EPGA tour.

Chapter five provided an overview of the structure of tournament professional golf. It offered some critical comments on the financial pressures which contribute to an increasingly global itinerary of events, and introduced some of the empirical research when analysing the effect of this global flow on golfers' technical approaches to playing the game. It is argued that a variety of different processes – such as attempts to standardise course set up and typography of host country – have led to a diminishing of contrasts while, at the same time, an increasing variety between players' approaches to playing golf. More specifically, players are constrained to develop similar types of play to each other, with an emphasis on hitting long accurate shots, while, at the same time, being required to manage constant varieties of grass types, climates, and altitudes. Beyond golf, such analysis can help shed light on the technical aspects of work in other similar, transient professions. The key point is that the work of highly skilled transient migrants is fundamentally the same, however, dealing with other people in alien environments means that it is likely they will have to adapt how they approach the technical aspects of their work which, in turn, impacts on their social selves. The context

provided in this chapter served to pave the way for the case study analysis detailed in the remaining chapters.

Chapters six to eight presented the main findings from the case study data which, when combined, aimed to explore how frequent workplace circulation inherent in the lives of highly skilled migrants affects their social selves. In order to help shed light on the processes that make people who they are, and thus contribute to behaving in the way that they do, an analysis of family issues, relationships between players, pay and conditions, and technical approaches to playing golf ensued. Chapter six sought to highlight some of the personal pressures enforced on highly skilled workers and their families. It is argued that as golf tournaments are being staged further afield, in a myriad of different countries, the golfers who ply their trade on tour are required to spend longer and longer away from their families and friends. The result, in part, is that professional golfers' lives are characterised by feelings of loneliness, isolation, and a sense of being cut off from their 'normal' world. Chapter seven explored the relationships between professional golfers away on tour and argued that players develop particular types of behaviours which contribute to the formation of friendship groups with other players. These friendship groups develop out of the need to help reduce the feelings of loneliness associated with touring professional golf and encourage players to act in quite specific ways. A closer examination of the relationships in such groups highlights that players are both friends and enemies at the same time. There is a level of togetherness and bonding between players in particular groups while also a sense conflict and rivalry among them given that they are, after all, in direct competition with each other.

Chapter eight focused on the ways and extent to which issues of money come to shape the lives of the majority of players given the financial pressures associated with playing an international schedule of events. It is argued that the prize money in professional golf, which has increased significantly over the past years, is heavily stacked in favour of the small number of players in the higher echelons of the game and the vast majority fare poorly in comparison. The result of this prize breakdown is that many players try and chase the monetary returns which are, in fact, only really accessible for the elite few. Thus they are pursuing golf as their main source of income even despite the small odds of making a living out of the game, particularly when considering the travel costs of an international schedule of events. The significant rewards that are available to the small few who finish highly enough on their tour contributes to a situation where many players struggle to view their chances of making a living in a realistic manner. All the chapters in this thesis have sought to examine, in one way or another, how interviewees came to deal with the realities of pursuing a career as a professional golfer. The next section presents an analysis of the appropriateness of the figurational approach adopted and, in doing so, it offers some more theoretical insights on the main conclusions derived from this project.

9.2 Appropriateness of figurational sociology

On the basis of the review of literature in chapter two it was argued that it is necessary to move beyond the sometimes abstract, theory dominated research on sports migration which offers conclusions that lack empirical support. A particular aim of this

study, therefore, was to strive to combine a clear empirical base with a theoretical framework in order to help more adequately explain the lives of highly skilled migrants. In doing so this project focussed particularly, although not exclusively, on the figurational concepts of figurations and interdependence, differential power relations, unplanned processes, and habitus. The purpose of this section of the conclusion, therefore, is to assess the extent to which these concepts have helped to make sense of the lives of touring professional golfers. In doing so, it will also summarise some of the major conclusions which can be drawn from the study.

For figurational sociologists, human interdependencies are a central feature of all relationships. More specifically, no individual has an existence completely separate from other human beings. No one is entirely independent as people are dependent on one another at a variety of different levels. People's lives develop as part of the 'figurations' they form, which are viewed as a network of interdependencies in which all people are enmeshed (Elias, 1978). Indeed, it proved particularly useful in this study to consider the lives of professional golfers to be embroiled in a network of interdependencies with others rather than existing in isolation. These relationships with other people ultimately played a key role in contouring golfers' lives. For example, it is argued that as golf tournaments are staged in a variety of countries, which tend to be increasingly further afield, players are required to spend longer periods of time away from home which leads to greater feelings of loneliness and isolation. The reality is such that while on tour players are in fact surrounded by many other people, however they still experienced feelings of being cut off from the 'real world'. In attempting to more adequately explain

why this is the case, it was useful to maintain a focus on figurations and particularly the concept of ‘meaningful contact’ (Elias, 2001a). Using these viewpoints, it is argued that people are never, in the real sense, in total isolation but rather it is their *perceptions* of their social reality that contributes to these feelings. More specifically, professional golfers are not isolated in terms of people who they have around them while out on tour, which often includes many other competitors and other tour personnel, but rather in terms of people who they have positive feelings towards, such as family and friends. Feelings of loneliness are even more pronounced in sports like touring professional golf, where constant movements of the workplace means that maintaining contact with significant others back home is difficult even despite contemporary advances in technology. The result is that professional golfers are increasingly required to live apart from their families and make adjustments to their lives, like coping with being apart from their children and a feeling of missing out on parts of their family lives. The fact that many professional golfers are on tour while their families are back at home means that feelings of loneliness and isolation are further compounded, given they cannot be close to people with whom they have meaningful feelings for.

Even when professional golfers are away from the work environment, where it is sensible to assume that they are able to spend ‘quality’ time with their families, the reality is such that the work of professional golf seemingly still has to come first. For example, activities such as practice, in order to maintain the playing standards required to make money out of their profession, or sponsorship commitments, tend to take up much of the players’ time even outside the competitive environment. Establishing a position on the

interdependence between professional golfers and their families, therefore, helped to reveal that the work of a professional golfer is not considered to be separate to their 'private' aspects of their wider lives. In other words, the work of professional golf begins to contaminate players' wider lives and, furthermore, in many cases they come to be defined by their employment in golf. The result is that professional golfers' work and family lives can often merge into one which affects all in the golfers' family. Players' partners, for example, often come to experience some of the negative consequences of their partner being a professional golfer, whether this is changing plans for practice purposes or being involved in activities in order to secure the finances needed to pursue a life on tour. Furthermore, the boundary between professional golfers' work and home lives is rarely, if ever, clearly defined. Locating the partners of players within the golfer figuration also helps to explain why, at times, the occupation of professional golf can in fact constrain the partners' ability to make choices independently from the work of the golfer.

The figural concept of 'we-group' formation proved fruitful when analysing the relationships between touring professional golfers while away on tour. Elias (2001a) argued that the development of 'we-groups' develops primarily from the need for individuals to seek to protect their own interests and survive in certain societies. Specifically referring to the notion of 'survival units' to explain the process whereby people move away from close family and friendship groups into new unfamiliar domains, it is argued that people are increasingly required to fend more for themselves and thus seek to form groups with other people in order to help with their 'survival' (Elias, 2001a).

The concepts of 'we-groups' and 'survival units' has been developed to include 'loose collections of temporary alliances' which are specifically used to capture the features of *temporary* 'we-groups' forged between people for mutually beneficial reasons (Dunning et al., 1988). The concept of 'we-groups' was used in this study to highlight the changeable nature of relationships between players on tour. Professional golf may be considered to be somewhat of an independent game, where players do not have to rely on other competitors, however, the reality is such that players actually have an interdependent relationship where they need each other to help try and reduce the feelings of loneliness which many of them experience. Professional golfers are, in effect, coming together in the face of stress which exhibits itself as feelings of loneliness. The concept of 'we-group' formation, therefore, proves useful in order to explain a workplace culture where golfers begin to adopt, both at a conscious and subconscious level, the mannerisms, attitudes and behaviours that help foster the development of temporary alliances. Professional golfers are constrained to develop these alliances for survival on tour and, specifically, for 'social' reasons – to help reduce feelings of loneliness, isolation, and homesickness – and for logistical reasons – to reduce the costs of travel. The concept of 'we-group' formation also proves useful in helping to understand how professional golfers behave when in groups on tour. For example, the importance placed on developing groups forces players to behave in a manner which is expected of them and not in a way that reflects actually what they are thinking. More specifically, players are expected to maintain a positive attitude on tour, particularly when times get tough during spells of poor performance and time away from their families, to avoid being

stigmatised by other players. The result is that many of these 'friendships' are not in fact real in the true sense of the term but somewhat superficial.

The concept of figurations also helped maintain a particular focus on the fluid and changing nature of relationships between professional golfers rather than viewing their lives as static and unchanging (Elias, 1978). From this viewpoint, it is argued that social phenomena can only be understood as the result of actions of interdependent people who are enmeshed in a complex web. Considering the changing nature of figurations served to illuminate how professional golfers' lives are characterised by a number of peaks and troughs, sometimes at the same time but in different aspects of their lives. By viewing professional golfers' lives in this way it soon became clear that players were both friends and enemies with each other, simultaneously, and from one context to another. In other words, the relationships between players in the same 'we-groups' are characterised by bonds of togetherness and comradeship while also showing evidence of tensions, conflicts, and rivalries between the same group of players. At one level players need each other to engage in social activities to reduce the monotony of being away, however, at the same time they are in direct competition with each other for a share of the overall prize money and prestige which comes from being successful in their chosen career. A figurational viewpoint was useful to make sense of the continuum between being a friend and an enemy, at the same time. In other words, people in modern society exist with levels of independence, such as being able to stand on their own two feet and fend for themselves while, at the same time, they are embroiled in networks with others to whom they are dependent on at a variety of different levels (Elias, 2001a). Viewing professional golfers as existing with this level of interdependence highlighted that on one hand players are

required to be on their own for much of their time while away on tour, such as in tournament preparation, but are also required to conform to particular we-group norms when appropriate, which can produce considerable tensions. In other words, the desire to compete independently as a professional golfer is combined with the need to remain within particular social we-groupings with other golfers.

Figurational viewpoints on the changing balance of power and the unplanned outcomes that are characteristic of all relationships proved to be useful when examining the lives of professional golfers in regards to the player-sponsor relationship. Power is viewed not as a substance or property possessed by particular groups, but rather as a structural characteristic of all human relationships (Elias, 1978). Furthermore, it is argued that the balance of power is not static but fluctuates between people in relationships (Mennell, 1992). In this study it proved illuminating to analyse the balance of power between people in the golfer figuration not as permanent but in flux. Furthermore, how power influences relationships illustrated how golfers' lives are constrained by others within the wider figurations that they are inescapably enmeshed. In other words, viewing the decisions made by professional golfers through this lens helped to see the impacts of their actions and to more adequately understand what this means for players' wider lives. For example, the costs of playing on an increasingly global schedule has constrained players to develop networks with sponsors for financial reasons, that enable them to commit to playing an international schedule of events, while at the same time has also served to, in some cases, make it more difficult for players to achieve their goal of playing better golf. In this regard, the player-sponsor relationship uncovered in this thesis

is considered to be somewhat double-edged. Many of the professionals interviewed were faced with an often conflicting choice between receiving regular money from equipment sponsors, or having the freedom to choose and play with a variety of different brand clubs but without that regular sponsorship income. For those that did have sponsors, this would allow a level of financial regularity in their work, however, they would have to adhere to sometimes restrictive contractual agreements which accompany them. The result is players may find it difficult to play with the new clubs in the stipulated contracts if this is something they are not used to playing with. These impacts on players are neither intended nor desired by the sponsors themselves, but indicative of the unplanned outcomes that are the results of the inability of any one group to retain complete control over the golfer figuration. Such unplanned outcomes are not unusual aspects of social interaction generally, but rather the result of complex processes involving the interweaving of actions by large numbers of people, including sponsors, who frequently pursue their own particular interests which may or may not coincide with the interests of the player themselves.

The figural concept of 'habitus' was used to help make sense of the economic pressures in the life of a professional golfer. Habitus refers to internalised constraints effecting people's behaviour which become second nature. A person's habitus develops, both consciously and subconsciously, over time from the network of relationships with which people find themselves (Elias, 1978). Through using this concept it became clear that the financial breakdown of professional golf, where many players' wages outside the top echelons of the game are largely determined by the outlay

of travel expenses deducted from prize money they earn, specifically contributes towards the formation of a particular type of habitus. This system of rewards, where only a small number of golfers can earn large sums of money, fosters internalised constraints relating to behaviour whereby many golfers ‘gamble’ on pursuing golf as their main source of income even despite the small chance of actually making a living out of the game. The result is that a player’s habitus is developed as a result of others who exist in the golfing figuration and helps to explain why, in many cases, professional golfers fail to view their world in a more detached and reality-congruent way and thus continue to chase the monetary returns which are only available to the elite few. Despite the small chance of being successful enough to achieve any sort of financial security, or for that matter any level of regular income in their lives, many interviewees believed that a big win would come soon. Therefore figural sociology, and specifically the concept of habitus, has helped to explain why many players found it difficult to disengage from the professional game and, in many circumstances, led to players targeting events on a tour where they had little chance of achieving a return on their financial outlay, but they still had the chance to win large sums of money if they did manage to have a good finish.

The golfer’s habitus has developed from these experiences, combined with motivations and aspirations from wanting to be a professional golfer from a very young age. Many players had dedicated a significant part of their lives to pursuing a career in professional golf and had little training for any other type of job. This habitus is further compounded by the fact that while on tour players surround themselves with many other like-minded players which harbours such attitudes further still and contributes to a

strengthening of the habitus of all players. This is because being on tour so regularly keeps players away from day-to-day contact with people outside the 'golfing figuration', and where they are surrounded by other people so equally involved they cannot shake the often unrealistic notion that their 'big break' will happen soon. Thus, it became clear that such a habitus existed in all participants regardless of their previous success. Even despite the fact that the higher ranked players who were interviewed had some 'evidence' that such a 'pay day' was likely to happen soon, most of the other players did not, however, they rarely deviated from the attitude that at the start of the tournament somebody will win and they have as much chance as anybody else. It is unlikely that such an attitude would exist in many other professions which do not have such a visible reward, in that should players have a very good week they have the potential to earn very large sums of money. As such, even despite the evidence they see on a daily basis of their own financial and personal struggles, and those of most of their fellow professionals, some golfers inevitably struggle to view their social world in a more object-adequate, detached way (Elias, 1987).

A central objective of this study was to genuinely seek to test the figurational approach by analysing the lives of touring professional golfers. After striving to undertake a process of open and honest reflection it can be concluded that all the figurational concepts presented in this thesis, in one way or another, proved helpful in answering the research questions. As the study developed the adequacy of such concepts, which were developed many years ago, became more apparent as they appeared to so accurately reflect the struggles which characterise the lives of contemporary professional

golfers. As such, it is argued that figurational sociology stood up to the test placed upon it. However it is, of course, for the reader to form their own views on the extent to which I have achieved such outcomes. It should also be stressed that other researchers have studied the lives of professional athletes and their families from other approaches to good effect, including symbolic interactionism (Ortiz, 1997, 2006; Roderick, 2003, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c, 2012, 2013, 2014) and from the writings of Pierre Bourdieu (Wacquant, 1995, 1998a, 1998b, 2001, 2007, 2011). Indeed combining these approaches with the research presented in this thesis may prove useful as a future avenue of enquiry.

Beyond these theoretical considerations, the author also reflected on the methodological practices adopted in this study. As is often the case with this type of research, it became apparent that certain aspects of a small number of interviews could have been probed a little further, such as how the career of professional golf comes to contaminate players' wider lives. Indeed it was the higher ranked players who were, unsurprisingly, under increased time constraints when compared with other players and thus the opportunity to follow up on specific questions with these people was a little curtailed. In future research the author would strive to have more time interviewing higher ranked players. It is to such future recommendations and implications of this study which the focus is now turned.

9.3 Future recommendations and implications of research

Even despite the contributions this research makes to understanding the lives of sport migrants there are, naturally, a number of potential avenues for future research. For

example, future projects could examine the lives of others who are enmeshed in the professional golfers' figuration. This may include player caddies, many of whom will have an identical travel itinerary to the golfers but generally work for a basic wage and a small percentage of any prize money won by the player. Caddies are, in effect, gambling on the hope that the professional golfer's gamble actually pays off. It is likely, therefore, that caddies are even more prone to the negative aspects of life on tour but with only a fraction of the supposed benefits.

Although this study did provide some comments on the lives of professional golfers' partners, given there were no interviews specifically undertaken with partners themselves these comments can only be taken at face value. The research presented here is purely from the point of view of the golfers, so interviews with golfers' partners would certainly add another dimension to the study given that this research identifies that they are key people in the golfers' relationships. It would be interesting to investigate how the partners of players cope with the lifestyle of professional golf and how they contribute to the feelings their golfing partner has. For example, do partners try and sustain the golfer's 'habitus', or try and break it, or any of the variations in between? Furthermore, investigating the lives of athletes' families has proved illuminating in other studies with professional sportspeople (see Ortiz, 2006; O'Toole, 2006; Roderick, 2012).

Maguire (2011b, p.1004) argues that:

Although women are travelling more frequently and in greater numbers, the trend of men moving more freely and in greater numbers, over time and across space

remains. This trend is based on a social structure that ensures that it is usually women who perform domestic and reproductive labour, whether in the company of their travelling partners or waiting 'at home'.

However, Maguire (2011b) provides little empirical evidence to support the claims that this is in fact the case. Indeed, there is a growing recognition of the increase in professional women athletes themselves migrating within sport, however, there is little knowledge of their experiences (Agergaard, 2008). Interviewing female professional golfers who compete on the Ladies European Tour (LET) and LET developmental tour, named the Access Series, for example, offers another potentially fruitful area of study given gender relations have been identified as a key part of contouring a migrant's life. Douglas and Careless (2006, 2008, 2009) have examined female golfers' careers from a psychological perspective and draw interesting conclusions on topics such as career transitions and mental health, however, they do not address the impact of their working lives generally, or increased travel schedules particularly, on the social selves of the golfers. There are clear economic dimensions to this topic too, given that women professional golfers tend to compete for much lower sums of money than their male counterparts but are still required to engage in a costly international schedule of tournaments. Given golf tournaments on the LET, for example, are staged in countries including Australia, China, India, Morocco, New Zealand, United Arab Emirates, and South Africa, means that a similar level of financial outlay is required just to get to events despite reduced rewards even if successful, when compared with the men's game. There is also evidence to suggest that sponsorship deals for women professional athletes tend to be less lucrative and more difficult to secure (Shin & Nam, 2004). These potential

avenues for future research would be interesting in their own right as well as providing an excellent comparative study with this work on the lives of male professional golfers.

By highlighting how professional golfers make sense of their everyday lives this research has made a unique contribution to knowledge in the area of migration across a variety of fronts. As such, not only does this research highlight the workplace pressures of professional golf, the sensitising concepts adopted and analysis undertaken can be used to help shed light on the relationship between work, money, and significant others in a variety of highly skilled occupations with similar non-settler transient migratory patterns. Tennis players, in particular, travel around the world in search of world ranking points and major/grand slam titles and thus the research presented here is especially pertinent to these athletes. Tennis players have constantly shifting workplaces and places of residence generally spending no more than eight days at each tournament venue (Maguire, 2011a). Being mobile for work is also a fundamental requirement for those professional athletes who commit to travelling tour circuits in order to engage in national and global competition in sports including European track and field athletics, Grand Prix circuit drivers, skiers, and cyclists who undertake events at different locations, often in different countries and continents, from one week to the next, and thus have similar transitory migratory patterns to the golfers presented in this study (Maguire, 2011a; Roderick, 2013). Despite the contributions that this project could make to understanding the lives of professional athletes in the aforementioned sports, studies specifically conducted on these workplaces would, naturally, provide an excellent avenue for future research in its own right and build on this particular study. This thesis has also used the sport of golf as

a vehicle to assess the nature of working life more generally. Therefore, this project has the potential to help shed light on the lives of other highly skilled workers outside of sport whose employment necessitates transient migratory patterns, such as motivational speakers, touring musicians, project managers, and other business elites with non-settler careers. When all of the above points are considered, it is argued that this project makes a significant contribution to knowledge in the area of ‘migration’ research specifically, and ‘work’ related research more generally.

In a practical sense, this research also has the potential to make important contributions to the formation of sports policy in the area of talent development across sports with these transitory migratory patterns. For example, a more adequate understanding of the reality of life as a professional golfer may help to inform elite sports development policy for the EPGA tour, England Golf (EG), and the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews (R&A). This could include policy specific information on the transition from amateur to professional. There is evidence that professional sport is becoming an increasingly attractive occupation for many aspiring young athletes (Darby & Solberg, 2010; Roderick, 2006a; Rosen & Sanderson, 2001). The high salaries top elite athletes earn, produced by a combination of increased demand and fewer restrictions, have induced more athletically-inclined youths to pursue a career in professional sport (Rosen & Sanderson, 2001). This surplus in labour combined with factors such as improvements in training facilities and knowledge of human performance have also led to an increase in the standard of sporting performance. Indeed there is evidence that players and the quality of performance are better now than in the past across most, if not all elite-

level sports (Rosen & Sanderson, 2001). It is deemed important, therefore, that athletes have the ‘edge’ over each other and there is a plethora of research analysing the factors which contribute to improving sport performance. Such research tends to focus on physiological, psychological, biomechanical, and coaching related factors. Golf, in particular, attracts a lot of research narrowly focussed on the ‘playing’ aspects of the game. Social and cultural factors, such as the lifestyle of professional golfers presented here, tend to be somewhat overlooked. However, Golfer R interviewed in this study, who was a former Official World Golf Ranking top 10 player and won 17 events worldwide including one major championship, argued that the “challenge isn’t so much adapting your game ... the challenge is how you adapt to the lifestyle, to the travel ... and everyone travels differently”. Golfer R was specifically referring to the importance of considering how players cope with the lifestyle of working in the ‘travelling circus’ which is touring professional golf. Thus, it is important to understand more about the cultural and social adaptations required for professional sportspeople that are transient migrants, and how this may contribute to the formation of elite sports development policy more generally.

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Appendix A

Interviewee Career Trajectories

Participant	Trajectory to tour
Golfer A	Played on EPGA tour for a period spanning 20 years in total. For 16 of those years had full playing rights and won one event. In the intervening four years had full playing rights on Challenge tour and won one event.
Golfer B	Played four years with full playing rights on Challenge tour followed by four years with full playing rights on EuroPro tour. Has also played some EPGA tour events.
Golfer C	Played on EPGA tour for a period spanning 21 years in total. For 18 of those years had full playing rights and won one event. Following this played on Seniors tour for six years. Has also played some Challenge tour events.
Golfer D	Played some events on EPGA tour spanning three years before earning full playing rights on Seniors tour for the following three years. Has also played some Challenge tour and EuroPro tour events.
Golfer E	Played on EPGA tour for a period spanning 11 years in total. For nine of those years had full playing rights. Has also played some Challenge tour events and had one win.
Golfer F	Played on Challenge tour for a period spanning nine years in total. For three of those years had full playing rights and for the other six years played on EuroPro tour.
Golfer G	Played on Challenge tour for a period spanning four years. For two of those years had full playing rights and for the other two played on EuroPro tour and had two wins.
Golfer H	Had full playing rights on EPGA tour for a period of 13 years.
Golfer I	Played one year on EuroPro tour followed by one year on EPD tour.
Golfer J	Had full playing rights on EPGA tour for five years. Has also played some Challenge tour events.
Golfer K	Played on EPGA tour for a period spanning 12 years in total. For eight of those years had full playing rights and for the remaining four played on Challenge tour.
Golfer L	Played for four years on EuroPro tour followed by one year on Challenge tour.
Golfer M	Played for two years on EPD tour.
Golfer N	Played on EPGA tour for a period of 19 years in total. For 11 of those years had full playing rights and won one event.

Golfer O	Played for five years on EPGA tour and won one event.
Golfer P	Played on Challenge tour for one year and some local events.
Golfer Q	Played on the EuroPro tour for eight years and has experience playing events on Challenge tour, US Hooters tour, Asian tour, and various local satellite tours.
Golfer R	Played a 'world tour' consisting of a combination of EPGA, USPGA, and other tournaments sanctioned by various worldwide organisations. Golfer R played EPGA tour events for a period spanning 21 seasons and won 17 events worldwide, one of these a Major Championship. Golfer R spent a number of weeks in the top 10 of the Official World Golf Rankings.
Golfer S	Played a 'world tour' consisting of a combination of EPGA, USPGA, and other tournaments sanctioned by various worldwide organisations. Golfer S played EPGA events tour for a period spanning 28 seasons in total and won six main tour events.
Golfer T	Played a 'world tour' consisting of a combination of EPGA, USPGA, and other tournaments sanctioned by various worldwide organisations. Golfer T played EPGA tour events for a period spanning 18 seasons in total and won 19 events worldwide, one of these was a Major Championship. Golfer T was a former number one in the Official World Golf Rankings.

Appendix B

Ethical Approval



**Faculty of Applied Sciences
Research Ethics Committee**

Tel: 01244 511740
Fax: 01244 511300
frec@chester.ac.uk

29th March 2012

Dear John,

Study title: A 'Race' to Dubai: the Globalization of the European Professional Golf Association Tour.
FREC reference: 632/12/JF/SEB
Version number: 1

Thank you for sending your application to the Faculty of Applied Sciences Research Ethics Committee for review.

I am pleased to confirm ethical approval for the above research, provided that you comply with the conditions set out in the attached document, and adhere to the processes described in your application form and supporting documentation. However, the Committee would like to make the following recommendations:-

- Pilot the questionnaire and amend the Participant Information Sheet to reflect the maximum time taken for completion
- Amend the Faculty name to the Faculty of Applied Sciences on all documentation
- Clarify on the documentation that, if requested, a copy of the findings from the study will be available as a short summary report.

The final list of documents reviewed and approved by the Committee is as follows:

Document	Version	Date
Application Form	1	February 2012
Appendix 1 – List of References	1	February 2012
Appendix 2 – C.V. for Lead Researcher	1	February 2012
Appendix 3 – Participant Information Sheets Players and Officials	1	February 2012
Appendix 4 – Participant Consent Form	1	February 2012
Appendix 5 – Interview Guide	1	February 2012

FREC B
Approval letter – 2011/12

With the Committee's best wishes for the success of this project

Yours sincerely,

cc

Enclosures: Standard conditions of approval

C/c: Supervisor/FREC Representative

Appendix C

Participant Information Sheets



University of
Chester



PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET - PLAYERS

A 'Race' to Dubai; the Globalisation of the European
Professional Golf Association Tour

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being undertaken and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully, and discuss it with others if you wish. You are encouraged to ask the researcher any questions or queries that you may have regarding the research. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Purpose of the study

To explore and examine the factors which contribute to the globalisation of the European Professional Golfers Tour and the consequences of such developments.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen because you have experience playing on one or more professional golf tours.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect the standard of care you receive in any way.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and asked to sign the consent form. You will participate in one interview designed specifically to obtain information relating to your personal experiences from playing on one or more golf tours. Based upon your responses to the questions, participant specific probes and prompts will be asked. You will be required to think hard and answer questions in a detailed manner. You are free to refuse to answer any questions within the interview schedule. The interview will last for a maximum of 60 minutes. With your permission the interview will be audio taped. No-one will be identifiable in the final report.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are no disadvantages or risks foreseen in taking part in the study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

As a player on one or more professional golf tours it may be possible that you welcome the opportunity to share and discuss your views and experiences with the researcher. By taking part, you will be contributing to the body data which aims to provide a more realistic appraisal of worldwide developments in golf.

What if something goes wrong?

If you wish to complain or have any concerns about any aspect of the way you have been approached or treated during the course of this study, please contact: Professor Sarah Andrew, Dean of the Faculty of Applied Sciences, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ. Tel: 01244 572000.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. All information which is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential so that only the researcher carrying out the research will have access to such information. Specifically, interview transcripts will be transcribed verbatim and subject to thematic analysis, coded and kept confidential and secure under an anonymous participant number. Only the researcher will know which participant corresponds to which number.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

All data collected will be kept in a anonymous format to allow any further investigation or critique of the research to take place. Also, any identifying detail from anything you state will be removed to ensure anonymity as it is intended that the results of this study will be published in scientific journals and presented at related conferences. You will be offered a summary of the findings of the study upon completion at your request.

Who is organising and funding the research?

John Fry, in collaboration with the Department of Sport and Exercise Science at the University of Chester will be organising and carrying out the study.

Who may I contact for further information?

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

John Fry
International Institute for Golf Education
Department of Sport and Sportsturf
Myerscough College
Bilsborrow
Preston
PR3 0RY
Email: [REDACTED]
Tel: [REDACTED]

Or alternatively, contact John Fry's research supervisor: Dr Daniel Bloyce, Deputy Head of Department Sport and Exercise Science, Tower CTW505, University of Chester, Parkgate Road, Chester, CH1 4BJ. Tel: [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. Email: [REDACTED]

Thank you for your interest in this research.

Appendix D
Participant Consent Forms



University of
Chester



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORMS

A 'Race' to Dubai; the Globalisation of the European
Professional Golf Association Tour

Name of Researcher: John Fry

Please tick the box if you agree with the statement:

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the participant information sheet for the above-named study, and have had the opportunity to ask the lead researcher any questions.

☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

☐

3. I agree to my interview being audio-recorded for the purpose of this research project

☐

4. I understand that my name and personal details will not appear in any report

☐

5. I agree to take part in the above study.

☐

Name of Interviewee

Date

Signature

Researcher

Date

Signature

Appendix E

Interview Schedule

Interview Schedule

EPGA Tour Player

Name: _____

Age: _____

Nationality: _____

Years as touring professional: _____

Golf tours played on: _____

European Tour Itinerary – use to frame answers

Middle East - United Arab Emirates (3), Qatar (1), Bahrain (1)

Africa - South Africa (4), Morocco

Asia - India, Malaysia (2), China (3), Korea Republic, Singapore

Europe - Italy (2), Spain (6), Portugal (2), England (2), Wales, France (3), Germany,

Scotland (3), Sweden, Ireland, Czech republic, Switzerland, Netherlands, Austria

General Background Questions

1. Can you briefly talk about your first experiences of playing professional golf?
 - a. What were your first experiences of life on tour?
 - b. How was the transition from amateur to professional?

International Tournament Schedule

2. What is your typical tournament rota?
[e.g. 2 weeks on and 2 weeks off / 3 weeks on and 1 week off]
3. What factors do you consider when planning your tournament schedule?
[Higher ranked players have automatic invites and more tournament choice]
 - a. To what extent does the purse and appearance money influence your decision?
 - b. To what extent does standard of field and ranking points available [either EPGA or World] influence your decision?
 - c. To what extent does location of tournament influence your decision?
 - i. Do you consider the type of course event is held at?
 - ii. Do you consider the accommodation and hospitality offered?

- d. To what extent do personal and family commitments influence your decision?
- 4. Do you ever change your tournament schedule during the season?
 - a. If so, what are the reasons for this?
- 5. What advice would you offer a rookie professional planning their schedule for the first time?

International Schedule and Golf Performance

- 6. How many countries have you played in as a touring golf professional?
- 7. How do you adapt your game when playing throughout the world?
 - a. How do you manage differences in styles of courses?
 - b. How do you manage different grasses?
 - c. How do manage a variety of different climates?
 - d. How do you manage the impacts of an often long travelling schedule?
 - e. What advantages to your game does playing around the world offer?
 - f. What disadvantages to your game may playing around the world have?
- 8. How do you keep in touch with your coach when playing around the world?
- 9. Is there anywhere in the world where you have a particularly good record?
 - a. What reasons do you give for this?
- 10. Is there anywhere in the world where you have a particularly poor record?
 - a. What reasons do you give for this?
- 11. What type of game is best suited for an international touring schedule?
[i.e - game that travels - coping with playing in a variety of different places]
- 12. What advice would you offer a rookie professional, regarding specifically their game, when playing an international schedule for the first time?

Life of a Professional Golfer

- 13. How would you describe the life of a professional touring golfer?
 - a. Do you enjoy life away on tour?
 - i. What do you like about being away on tour?
 - ii. What do you dislike about being away on tour?
- 14. Have you had to make any significant sacrifices to pursue a life on tour?

15. To what extent does an international schedule impact on your 'normal' life?
 - a. Would you say it impacts on your family life?
 - i. Partners / children / friends?
 - b. Do have many friends on tour?
 - c. Do you socialise when away on tour?
 - i. What do you do to socialise?
 - ii. Who is it that you tend to socialise with on tour?
 - i. To what extent do you socialise with fellow golfers? Other personnel on tour? Other people beyond golf?
16. To what extent do you try to minimise the impact an international schedule may have on your 'normal' life?
 - a. To what extent do media technologies play a role?
 - b. To what extent do you design your tournament schedule with this in mind?
17. Outside of golf, are there places on tour which you visit that you really like?
 - a. If so, what reasons are given for this?
18. Outside of golf, are there places on tour which you visit that you really dislike?
 - a. If so, what reasons are given for this?
19. To what extent does money play a part in the life of a professional golfer?
 - a. What are the practical costs of playing on tour? [plus issues of taxation]
 - b. What are your thoughts on prize money breakdown?
 - c. What changes does playing golf for your living mean?
 - d. To what extent is a sponsor important?
 - e. How important is marketing and 'selling' yourself?
20. How important is a management company?
 - a. What is the role of a management company?
 - b. What do you look for in a management company?
 - c. How is your relationship with your management company?
21. What personal characteristics would you say are required for a successful life on tour?
22. What advice would you offer a rookie professional experiencing life on tour?

Other Golf Tours

23. Have you played on any other golf tours?
24. How would you compare the EPGA tour with other tours you have played on?

- a. What are the key differences and similarities?
 - i. How do you rate the prize money on offer?
 - ii. What is the standard of competition in the field?
 - iii. What do you think of the style of courses and type of play required?
 - iv. What are your thoughts on organisation and hospitality?
- 25. Have you ever considered or made the decision to change tours?
 - i. If so, what factors contributed to this decision?
 - ii. How did you find the process of changing tours?
- 26. What influences your decision to choose the EPGA tour over other tours?

If you could change the EPGA tour, what would you do?